1283

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

MODERN TIMES.

VOL. I.

MODERN TIMES;

OR,

ANECDOTES

OF THE

ENGLISH FAMILY.

1283
THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

I dwell upon small matters, being of opinion with Plutarch, that little circumstances show the real men better than things of greater moment.——*Guardian, No. 6.*

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PREFACE.

The Novel, to which these remarks are introductory, was written under the influence of motives, which, if they could be properly explained, would ensure its success in the world, even though it had a thousand more defects than will be found in the performance. The writer was once disposed to have fairly and candidly stated the inducements which

prompted him to the undertaking: but he has been deterred by persons, on whose judgment he can rely with so much confidence, as to prefer it, readily, to his own opinion. The persons alluded to were not all of them authors, but they have all been conversant with the world, so as to have acquired considerable knowledge of the leading principles of action in the human mind; and, it is remarkable, that, though numerous, they unanimously agree, that amusement, derived from a literary performance destitute of a single particle of real merit, and published from, no matter what motives, is much more

certain to produce advantage to its author, than the best intentions in the world, explained with the utmost sincerity, and backed by the strongest moral recommendations. "If, therefore," said one of my advisers, "your book afford entertainment "—a fig for your motives in publishing "it."

I will not, therefore, tell my readers why these pages are sent into the world: but will leave them to all the vast variety of conjectures which their different dispositions may suggest. They may suppose me desirous of fame, without having attached my name to the work: they may

imagine that pecuniary advantage is my object, without knowing whether I have any interest in the sale of the publication, or whether the sale of it be an object worthy of attention: they may conjecture that it was written to while away the tedious hours of sickness,—as a certain author tells us, he was induced to publish a volume of Travels by Sea and Land: they may give me credit for having been induced, by the solicitations of my friends, to exhibit this bantling of fancy, as Mrs. Salmon shewed her wax figures—to all who chose to pay for a sight,—without knowing whether my friends deserve so bad a compliment: they

may think that I want to pass for a person of observation and discernment, without any idea whether the scenes described came under my own eye, or are the mere phantoms of the brain: they may attribute to me a sarcastic spitefulness, and believe that I feel a gratification in ridiculing the foibles, and exposing the follies, of others, without any knowledge of my disposition, or any idea of my temper: in short, they may *suppose, imagine, conjecture, think*, just as they please, so that they will but condescend to read the following pages, to correct in their own conduct what they perceive amiss in the de-

lineations here exhibited to them; and imitate whatsoever they find recorded in the narrative, either virtuous or praiseworthy.

But, lest there should arise any mistake in the minds of that class of my readers, whose extreme sensibility might incline them to apply to themselves some of the remarks, which, if so intended to be applied, would perhaps have been ill-natured and indecorous, I beg leave once for all, to say, that to avoid the possibility of giving offence, my manuscript has been seen by every one of the persons whose character is introduced into the work, and that in

general they appear to have been remarkably well pleased with the execution of it, considering the freedoms which have been used with some of them. To convince the general reader of this, I shall subjoin extracts from the communications with which I have been honoured on this subject; and which I consider as so many testimonials in favour of the work.

Testimonial the First.

"SIR PHILIP ENGLISH thanks the au-
"thor of *Modern Times*, for the enter-
"tainment which the perusal of his MS.
"has afforded him, and so far from being

"offended at the freedom which he per-
"ceives has been taken with his family
"affairs, assures the author, that no part
"of the work has given him greater plea-
"sure than that in which Sir Philip E.
"has been made contributory to the
"mirth of those around him."

Testimonial the Second.

"COLONEL COURTLY is prodigiously
"flattered by having been made so con-
"spicuous a character in *Modern Times*."

Testimonial the Third.

"ADMIRAL ORTOLAN has no objection
"to the author of *Modern Times* telling

"the truth about the farmer's wife in the "stage coach; but the story of the oyster "is all a fudge."

Testimonial the Fourth.

"COUNSELLOR COLLIS is of opinion, "that the author of *Modern Times* would "have acted with more propriety, if he "had procured affidavits of all the facts "he states as such, in his book, some of "them on very doubtful authority. The "Counsellor has taken great pains to ex-"amine the several reports, and is sorry "that many of them are worded with "great ambiguity; so that it is very

"difficult to form an opinion whether "any penalty has been incurred either "under the statute of *scan. mag.* or other "Acts of Parliament. The Counsellor "begs leave to correct an error in one of the "incidents related of himself:—the book "alluded to in page 236, Vol. I. being "Blackstone's Commentaries, instead of "Comyns's Digest, as mentioned by the "author."

Testimonial the Fifth

"Miss Savannah thinks the author of "*Modern Times* might have had more "sense than to select the conversation "which she held with Admiral Ortolan

"at Colonel Courtly's, for the amuse-
"ment of his readers: for to her perfect
"recollection, she had been talking
"during the whole day, and must have
"said a thousand things which would
"have cut a better figure in print."

Testimonial the Sixth.

"SIR;

"I THINK it is very impertinent
"in your making allusions to the frolics of
"a nobleman, in your pretended novel.
"I was educated at College as well as you,
"and shall write a book myself, in which
"you will find yourself finely lampooned.
"What the devil, is not a young man to

"the author will represent him accord-
"ingly."

Testimonial the Eighth.

"Respected Friend;

"I have to congratulate thee "upon the extraordinary success of thy la- "bours, in having corrected the shame- "facedness of my son Nicholas Juxon, the "younger, who had of late waxed froward "with regard to the regulations of our so- "ciety; but, on reading thy strictures upon "the times present, and perceiving that "thou hast introduced me, though unwor- "thy, among the great ones of the land, "hath become reconciled to the garb as

" well as the simplicity of him who begat " him. For this thou hast my thanks, " and I assure thee that I take in good " part, what thou hast said relative to thy " friend,

" NICHOLAS JUXON,
" *the Elder.*"

" If thou will let me know where thou " sojournest, I will send thee a morsel of " meat,—to wit, a turkey and chine, that " thou mayest make merry with thy " friends. So fare thee well."

Honoured and obliged as I feel by such kind encouragement, I will not push my

good fortune too far, nor presume to publish the letters of Mrs. Chaloner and her accomplished friend; but rather imitating the good sense, and good nature of the latter, on another occasion, suppress what might prove, perhaps, equally discreditable to both parties. For these ladies can not deny, that many things may pass in a private correspondence, which were thought *agreeable and appropriate* at the time, but which are not proper to be *repeated publicly.*

I am satisfied that after a little reflexion my fair friends will agree with me on this head, and be better pleased to hear that I

have sealed up their letters, and endorsed them "*never to be opened, unless in the* "*presence of the writers,*" than if I had complied with the wish which *in their anger,* they have thought fit to express that I would suffer them to *tell their own story.* There are so few persons who, charming and beautiful as they are, would have believed half of what they have said to me; and so many, who would have abused and accused us all, and whispered trick, contrivance, and conspiracy, in a very audible manner, that my ingenious correspondents must excuse the liberty I have taken, in persisting to *tell their story*

for them, regardless of their desire to indite their own narrative. They will please to observe, that, instead of a relater of facts, I should then become a mere apologist: and ever since the *Apology for the Life of George Ann Bellamy,* and a few indiscreet publications of the same stamp, they may depend upon it, that the public is inclined to think silence a stronger recommendation of a handsome woman than any thing which her pen can convey:—Mrs. Chaloner and her friend will, therefore, allow me to make the same remark to them, as I should have done to the celebrated author of *Cœlebs*

in Search of a Wife, if she had given me the same opportunity.

They have my sincerest good wishes, notwithstanding the displeasure they have manifested: and I shall be proud of any future opportunity of recording better things of them, both for their own sakes, and the sake of their protectors, than I could with truth insert in these pages.

Before I conclude, let me not fail to acknowledge, with the respect it deserves, the admonitory letter which a certain *scribe* has sent to me, by the desire of a person whom I never saw, nor heard of before, in consequence of this *very sensi-*

ble person having fancied that he perceived his own likeness in the mirror of *Modern Times.* "*The cap,*" perhaps, "*fitted, but* "*it did not seem very becoming;*" to this same *scribe* I shall only answer, "UMPH!"

Buen-Retiro,
September, 1809.

MODERN TIMES.

CHAPTER I.

"MODERN TIMES!" exclaimed Sir Philip English, throwing down a newspaper with which he had been amusing himself: "Volumes, indeed, may be written on the "subject; but the best that can be said "is, that they are full of contradictions, "inconsistencies, and absurdity!"

Mrs. Burrows, an elder sister of the Baronet, who had resided with him for many years, was sitting by, with her spectacles on, to assist the power of a magnifying glass in enabling her to read a description of the fashionable dresses in

Le Beau Monde or some other polite repository of nonsense.—" Brother," said the old lady, " you were never more
" mistaken in your life ;—they afford a
" most interesting picture of worth and
" generosity ; and I defy the most fasti-
" dious critic to point out a single instance
" to justify your unmerited censure."

" Sister," replied Sir Philip, " it is
" very provoking that you always oppose
" my sentiments :—surely I am at least
" old enough to form an opinion of what
" I hear and read."

" But, my dear brother," rejoined Mrs. Burrows, " you, like most other
" men, think yourself gifted with so much
" discrimination, that you read very su-
" perficially, and yet pronounce your
" opinions in the most positive manner.
" I assure you, that I do not recollect in

"*Modern Times* any instance of a country "gentleman, who scarcely ever looked "into a book, unless perhaps his Family "Bible or the Racing Calendar, who all "on a sudden turned critic upon us, and "damned the reputation of an author "whose works he had probably never "seen, nor even heard of, but by the "title, with as little ceremony as he "would flog one of his hounds."

"I wish," said Sir Philip, "that I had "neither seen nor heard of the works of "this *author*, as you call him. Very "fine works, to be sure! and in pretty "extravagant binding too! Generosity "truly! Let a man be just before he pre- "tends to be generous. Generous, in- "deed, with what has been extorted, "absolutely extorted, from the honest "and industrious amongst the middling

"and lower classes, reduced almost to
"want by this same *author of the*
"*Miseries of Human Life*, (whom you
"always undertake to defend)—and for
"what? — for the purpose of giving
"grand dinners to a set of *black-letter*
"*men*, his old associates, and newspaper
"compositors, his new supporters."

"I have told you an hundred times,
"brother," said the lady, "that in esti-
"mating the value of an author's works,
"we have nothing to do with his do-
"mestic concerns. What right can we
"possibly have to scrutinize his affairs?
"What you speak of, respecting his ex-
"travagance, is not at all the concern of
"the public."

"It is," replied Sir Philip, "the
"concern of the public, of you and me,
"and every one who pays that cursed

"*income-tax*, if our money goes to sup-
"port it. Is it not our money that he
"squanders?—Does not this newspaper
"expressly state the enormous sums ex-
"pended even in printing and stationery,
"when a fifth part of the money, if
"properly managed, would have been
"sufficient; whilst those, whose pockets
"pay for all, are suffering a thousand
"privations and distresses? And yet,
"Arabella, you would have me join you
"in praising this famous author of the
"*Miseries of Human Life*."

"I cannot think, Sir Philip," said Mrs. Burrows, "where you get your
"intelligence. I suspect, indeed, it must
"be some ill-natured critic who misleads
"you:—however, I assure you that I
"have been told by the best authority,

" that the author of the new novel is a " very distinguished writer, and a person " of a very different stamp from him to " whom you attribute the work."

" Sister," resumed the Baronet, " I " wish you would talk in plain English, " without so much metaphor: I am " really at a loss to know what you " mean."——

" Why, did you not this moment as-" sert, that the author of the *Miseries of* " *Human Life*, whom every one who " reads any of the modern publications " may readily guess at, is the writer of " the new novel called *Modern Times*?"

" No, no, sister, I never said any " such thing," replied Sir Philip. " Is it " possible, Arabella, that you can have " attended to my remarks, and ask such

" a question? Have I said any thing " about *novels*? Was I not lamenting " the miserable condition of the country, " and the inconsistence of calling the " extravagance of ministry acts of mu- " nificence and generosity, whilst the " honest and industrious tradesman and " mechanic are suffering under an almost " intolerable weight of taxation?'"

" Mercy on me, brother! I protest that " your observations struck me in a very " different light.—Before I took up the " magazine in my hand, I had just been " thinking of a new novel, which I lately " read, and with very great satisfaction:— " and when you so emphatically pronoun- " ced the title of it " *Modern Times*," I " totally misunderstood the subsequent " remarks, and supposed that you were " pronouncing a very severe and unme-

" rited sentence upon the author of that " work, in consequence of having per- " haps seen it advertised in the news- " paper."

" Well, well, sister, although you often " upbraid me by saying that my notions " are old-fashioned, it seems that you " sometimes think me capable of making " *novel* remarks! But, pray, what is " this same publication? Does it say any " thing of the war and the ministry?"

" Something of both," replied Mrs. Burrows; " and what you would very " well like, if you would give yourself " time to peruse it with attention; and " not dip into it in the middle of a " volume, as the professed despisers of " novels are apt to do."

" And does it mention the public " amusements," said Sir Philip, " and

" the luxury and dissipation of this de-
" generate age?"

" All these are mentioned, and I think, " brother, in a very proper and becoming " manner:—not in the acrid style of the " *Satyrist*, nor with the puritanical cant " of the spiritualizing sect, who are fond " of drawing the picture of vice at full " length; and seem to expose its most " hideous deformity, rather with a view " of feasting their own eyes upon it, " than to render it odious in the sight of " the world. The foibles of the great " are fairly laid open, but the shafts of " ridicule are barbed with good humour; " and whilst the author has said many " things which those to whom they re- " late would blush to acknowledge, the " story is so told, that almost every one " who reads it will enjoy a secret satis-

"faction in beholding the likeness of his "neighbour.

"In short, *Modern Times* exhibits a "sort of whimsical mirror, in which "every one who looks in it sees the "likeness of his acquaintance, but can "not always recognize his own features. "Sometimes he may think the figure a "little distorted, but it is never rendered "disgusting. It may amuse, but never "terrifies. Some of the faces may also "seem to have improved by being re- "flected: but they are only heightened "to such a degree of excellence as is "perfectly consistent with probability; "fit to excite emulation, but not calcu- "lated as an incentive to envy."

"And who is the author of the per- "formance?" said Sir Philip.

"There are various opinions on that

" subject," replied Mrs. Burrows. The
" work made its appearance when I was
" at Brighton last summer. It was an-
" nounced as usual in the public papers,
" and displayed on the library tables.
" Sir William de la Roche first mention-
" ed it to me, as we were walking on
" the Steyne. He said that he was per-
" fectly acquainted with many of the
" persons whose characters were so well
" drawn in the work, that he had no
" difficulty in recognizing his acquaint-
" ances.

" I asked him if his own portrait was
" amongst them. " I will leave you to
" " find that out," said he, " and will
" " send you the book to-morrow morn-
" " ing."—The day was stormy, and
" you know how miserably dull and
" comfortless every thing appears in such

" weather at Brighton, where even the " interesting anxiety which is excited by " seeing vessels tossed about on the rough " waves is denied to us; and the ruffled " surface of the water, variegated only " by its white foam; (not even a single " ship within the reach of vision) is the " only object of contemplation. Unless, " indeed, some dashing belle, desirous of " exhibiting herself as the daughter of " Æolus, attended perhaps by a military " hero, closely wrapped in his surtout " coat, defies the inclement blast, and " makes a hasty transit over the de- " serted Steyne."

" Quite picturesque, Arabella, upon " my word."

" True, brother, but not beautiful. " Let me proceed with my narrative. " The weather being so unfavourable, I

" was the more impatient to see the book " which had been so obligingly promised " me. At length, but not until the hour " of dinner, Sir William de la Roche " was announced.

" " Pray, Sir William, where is the " " novel?"

" " Excessively concerned, madam, at " " being compelled to postpone the ho- " " nour of being laughed at at present, " " by not being able to afford you an " " opportunity of perusing what the " " author has been pleased to say of " " your very humble servant:—but not " " a single copy can be procured. The " " whole town is in an uproar, and two " " or three duels are expected in conse- " " quence of the efforts which have been " " made to get a first sight of the " " work."

"It seems that Miss Courtly, whom "we observed going into the library, as "we were walking the preceding evening, "had casually opened the first volume, "and the paragraph which immediately "presented itself was an exact description "of the person of her old and eccentric "admirer, Colonel Chatwell. She could "not forbear laughing at the picture, "which is drawn with equal correctness "and good-humour; and handed the "book to young Clackson, who is an en-"sign in the Colonel's regiment. Clack-"son, without in the least suspecting the "contents, began to read it aloud; he soon "perceived for whom the sketch was in-"tended, and vastly enjoyed the diversion "it afforded to the company: but, before "he had proceeded to the bottom of the "page, found that his own likeness was

" coupled with that of his commander.
" " The golden locks of the beardless
" " boy, proclaiming the glory of a de-
" " scent more illustrious than that of
" " the race of Stuart; even from great
" " Apollo himself," so well accorded
" with the frequent boastings of the little
" ensign, prepared him to expect some-
" thing more than a mere sketch;—per-
" haps a whole length picture of himself;
" and, therefore, pretending to recollect
" an engagement which he had never
" made, he hastily closed the book, and
" returned it to Miss Courtly.

" The curiosity of the company was
" however sufficiently excited: every one
" was eager to obtain a sight of the per-
" formance, and seemed to expect his or
" her share of the author's notice. The
" few copies at the library found imme-

"diate purchasers, and the bookseller "assured Sir William de la Roche, that "he could have sold the whole edition in "twenty-four hours. Clackson became "the principal object of raillery, as he "was the only person then at Brighton "who was recognized among the charac-"ters depicted in the work:—but when "a fresh supply had been obtained from "London, and the book was more gene-"rally circulated, several other persons "well known amongst the company, par-"ticipated in the honour of notoriety, "with which, although in many instances "it was occasioned by their follies or ec-"centricities, they almost without excep-"tion seemed to be much better pleased, "than if they had been entirely neglected."

"But who is the author of the book?" repeated Sir Philip.

"Sir William de la Roche," replied Mrs. Burrows, "attributed it to a young "gentleman who had been at Brighton "during what is called the season, for "two or three preceding years; and who "mixed with the company on almost "every occasion; and yet appeared to be "completely isolated among them, as he "was scarcely ever observed to exchange "a word with any one. From the pecu-"liarity of his dress, he was called *the* "*little green man.*

"There were others, who thought that "it was written by an old clergyman who "usually takes a house on the cliff for a "month or two every summer:—but this "was not a very probable conjecture; for "he is a pluralist with a very large in-"come, and not only too rich, but too "lazy, to write with such spirit as is dis-

" played by the author. In fine, the no-
" vel of *Modern Times* has attracted so
" much notice, that imagination has been
" perpetually at work to discover to whom
" the public is obliged for the entertain-
" ment which it affords: and it has been
" ascribed to almost as many different
" persons as there are different characters
" exhibited in the book.

" The last ball I was at, the conversa-
" tion happened to be on this very sub-
" ject; and one of the company, who
" seemed to be a critic by profession, as-
" serted, that there were intrinsic marks
" by which he could perceive that the au-
" thor was certainly a lawyer. He said
" that the words *whereas* and *likewise* oc-
" curred three times in two pages, and
" that *appurtenances* was often used in-
" stead of *appendages*.

" I remember that I was much diverted
" by this sagacious remark; for there was
" a clergyman present, who insisted that
" the words were nearly synonimous, and,
" said, that he could not recollect any
" other proofs of their distinct meaning
" than that appurtenances might more
" correctly describe the curls of a judge's
" wig, and appendages the three tails.
" He also instanced the anecdote of Judge
" Willes, who reprimanded a witness for
" taking up the time of the Court by un-
" meaning repetitions. " You are per-
" " petually repeating *also* and *like-*
" " *wise*," said his Lordship, " and
" " they are words of exactly the same
" " import."

" " Your Lordship is mistaken," re-
" plied the fellow, " I could soon shew
" " that there is a great difference be-

" " tween them." " Let me hear you,"
" said the Judge.

" " My Lord," said the man, very
" archly, " " your father was a judge."
" " Very well," said his Lordship, " " what
" then?"—" Your Lordship is a judge
" " *also*, but not *like-wise*."

" To pursue my account:—The critic
" appeared to be very unequally matched
" against his opponent; and without at-
" tempting to confute him, proceeded to
" remark, that the circumstance of the
" author's having avoided being libellous,
" and yet employed all the instruments
" which constitute a libel, was another
" proof that he belonged to the profession
" of the law.

" This, his antagonist also objected to.
" " If," said he, " by the instruments
" " which constitute a libel, you mean

" " pen, ink, and paper, every writer is
" " in the same predicament: if vowels
" " and consonants, words and sentences,
" " to be sure they are the elements out
" " of which spring equally libels, and
" " the laws which punish them; but the
" " ingredients of a libel appear to me to
" " consist of an intention to injure the
" " reputation of another by malignant
" " assertions, and mischievous abuse;
" " and a disposition to defame any per-
" " son by unfair and unjust opinions of
" " his words and actions, or misrepre-
" " sentations of the motives in which
" " they originated. Every thing short
" " of this, however galling and dis-
" " agreeable to the feelings of the per-
" " son whose conduct or pursuits are
" " scrutinized, is in my opinion the un-
" " doubted privilege of a free-born Eng-

" " lishman, which I should be sorry to
" " see abridged: but he who exceeds the
" " honourable barrier which forms the
" " line of distinction I have attempt-
" " ed to draw between fair discussion
" " and scriptorial licentiousness, deserves
" " the severest disgrace and punishment.
" " But I see nothing of this kind,"
" said he, " in *Modern Times*, and,
" " therefore, to say that the author has
" " used the means of libelling skilful-
" " ly, because he knew how far the law
" " allows him to go, is just as if you
" " should assert that he who wears a
" " sword is always ready to stab his
" " neighbour, and is only prevented
" " doing it by fear of the gallows:—
" " or that every person who carries a
" " pistol in his pocket must necessarily
" " be a highwayman. You must also

" " allow that the author of *Modern* " " *Times* has distributed commendation " " with at least as liberal a hand as he " " has applied censure."

" The critic was unable to parry the " blow; but it did not silence him; and " he obstinately maintained the same " opinion with which he had commenced " his observations. For my own part, I " have no idea who wrote the book: but " I think it comes of a good family, be- " cause it is well dressed, and is neither " awkwardly diffident nor insolently bold: " and if you would like to be acquainted " with it, I will introduce it to your no- " tice as soon as it is returned from a friend " who has borrowed it."

" Pray, sister," said the Baronet, do " you know the name of the clergyman " who spoke so well about libels? I think

" I should like to be acquainted with *him*
" as well as the book."

" I never saw him before," replied Mrs. Burrows, " but was told that his name is
" Worth, and when I mentioned the con-
" versation to Miss Courtly, she smiled,
" and said, that he was a frequent visitor
" at her father's house: and added, that
" Mr. Worth was not only a very good
" scholar, but remarkably candid and li-
" beral in his opinions, but too sincere
" in his disposition, to have spoken so
" highly in praise of the author, unless
" he had known him to deserve his com-
" mendation.

" Worth is a good name," said the Baronet; " it speaks for itself; he must be a
" *worthy* man."

" I was afraid, brother, of that unfor-
" tunate coincidence of sound and sense,

"or rather nonsense: you know I detest
"the vile art of punning."

"Well, then," replied Sir Philip, "I
"will not *punish* you with any more of
"it, if you will give me a sight of the
"book, and introduce me to the worthy
"Mr. Worth."

Mrs. Burrows repeated her promise, and withdrew.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. *

CHAPTER II.

THE conversation related in the preceding chapter began in such a manner as to threaten an altercation, if not a quarrel, between Sir Philip English and his sister, who, notwithstanding their proneness to such incidents, loved each other with the sincerest affection; but the whimsicality of the mistake, into which the lady had fallen, converted the displeasure, which she had at first felt, into good-humour.

Fortunately, the Baronet's curiosity was so much aroused by the *dénoûment*, that he abstained from farther political remarks, which incessantly involved him in these domestic wranglings, which the volubility of Mrs. Burrows rendered some-

times extremely irksome to him, and when carried on before witnesses, as was often the case, not less diverting to them.

It may not be wholly uninteresting to the reader, to become a little acquainted with the history of Sir Philip English and his sister, before the period at which they are now introduced to him.

Sir Philip was a rough English Baronet of the old school. He had been educated in the usual manner, with much tenderness on the part of his mother, who superintended his studies herself for the first ten years of his life; with much indulgence, on the part of Sir Hugh English, his father, who taught him to ride on horseback as soon as he was able to hold the bridle, and gave him a relish for hunting, fishing, and field sports, even before he had altogether escaped from the nursery.

At length, emancipated from his preceptress, he was sent to a great school in the neighbourhood of his father's seat; and, in time, acquired sufficient knowledge of books and of the manners of the age, to qualify him for making a respectable figure among the best company in the county; to deliver his opinion freely before a bench of country justices, or at a meeting of freeholders; and, in short, to prepare him for the duties of his station.

The property, which he expected to inherit, gave him a title to be considered among the first persons of the county in which his father resided; and, with a knowledge of his birthright, he imbibed a spirit of independence, ever impatient of control, which, when strengthened by length of years, and ultimately, the possession of the estate which fell to him during his

minority, rendered him sometimes less ceremonious in the delivery of his sentiments, than was thought, by some of his neighbours, consistent with politeness.

Sir Philip was, moreover, what the world commonly calls an old bachelor.

It might be difficult to decide whether this was more the effect of choice or of accident. He had in his youth been disposed to entertain a *penchant* for the daughter of a clergyman; and as the superiority of his rank and fortune enabled him, as he thought, to address her with less ceremony than if their condition in life had been more nearly on a *par*, he took an opportunity of speaking to the old gentleman on the subject; and, at once, made an offer of his hand and fortune, without pursuing the tedious and cir-

cuitous course of first applying to the young lady herself.

The parson, who thought that his daughter could have no possible objection to become the lady of a Baronet, with a good constitution and a fine estate, gave him the most flattering reply; and invited him to visit his daughter the next day.

Sir Philip accordingly put an additional pair of horses to his coach, dressed himself with more than ordinary care, and proceeded to the Rectory, where, alighting at the garden-gate, he found the family in the greatest confusion imaginable.

The parson was in a prodigious rage, and his wife almost in a phrenzy;—for the young lady, who, by the bye, had not the most distant idea of the honour intended her, had, that very morning, eloped

with the son of a rich brewer, a young gentleman who had been for some time under the tuition of her father. The Doctor and his wife had pursued the fugitives as far as the next town, but hearing nothing of them there, were just returned to the parsonage.

Sir Philip, whose heart was not so much set upon the match, as for it to be broken by this disappointment, was yet secretly vexed at it; and the more so, because he considered it to be entirely his own fault; for his pride would not suffer him for a moment to imagine, if he had announced his intention to the young lady, that she could have preferred the son of a brewer to an independent Baronet.

The displeasure of the reverend Doctor at the imprudence of his daughter, was greatly increased by reflecting upon

the injury which he might suffer from it in his character as a schoolmaster. He had also another daughter; and, as the principal inducement of many who placed their sons under his care was the domestic comforts they were permitted to enjoy under his roof, where they were treated as if belonging to his own family,—that very circumstance, which had hitherto been the strongest recommendation of his school, might hereafter be considered replete with incalculable mischief; and when, to this serious consideration, were superadded, the weight of the Baronet's fortune, the benefits of such an alliance, and the prospect of future advantage to which it might lead, —the temper of the old gentleman, naturally warm, and his philosophy and patience not the most prominent features in his character,—some allowance might be

made for a little extravagance on such an occasion.

He was, indeed, grievously provoked; and whilst his wife applied a thousand abusive epithets to the fugitives, accompanied by some reproaches for the indulgences which her husband had shewn to his quondam pupil, and the opportunities, which, she said, he had given him, of conversing with his daughter, while the parson was poring over his books, or smoking his pipe,—the Doctor threw himself on the grass plat before his door, and uttered a whole Litany of maledictions in Greek, till the Baronet began to entertain serious apprehensions that the disappointment had turned his brain.

Sir Philip was naturally a good-humoured man, lively and cheerful in his disposition, and with such a share of the *ani-*

mal risibile, that at another time he would have laughed heartily at such a scene; but, on the present occasion, it came rather too near home. However, as the parson continued his extravagances, the Baronet could not forbear smiling, while he exhorted his intended father-in-law to remember the doctrines of patience and submission, which he had so often taught to others.

"I do, I do," said the Doctor; "have "I not *again and again* exerted the abi-"lities with which Providence has been "pleased to bless me, in the most serious "and solemn admonitions, that pupils "should reverence their instructors; and "children obey their parents?"

Here Sir Philip interrupted him:—"Well, Doctor, you find that your pu-"pil has even exceeded thefirst part of

"the commandment: he has extended
"his love to your daughter!"

"Do not mock me, Sir Philip; I
"am already provoked beyond endur-
"ance. *Mind what I say.* Have I not
"*again and again* enforced the doctrine
"of the Apostle, by reproof, by rebuke,
"by exhortation? In that sanctuary,"
pointing to the village church which stood
opposite to the garden in which this curious
scene was exhibited: "in that sanctuary,
"did I not on the last Sabbath, in order
"to make the more striking impression on
"the minds of all who heard me, and
"especially on my daughter Catherine,
"did I not cast down the Church Bible
"into the pew where she was sitting?
"And that I might not be misunderstood
"through affected pomp of expression,

"did not I, with *a mighty voice,* demand,
"in the vulgar tongue, "if you do not
"“mind your father and mother, who
"“the devil will you mind?”

"It is that nonsensical vehemence of yours," interrupted his wife, "which made the girl always laugh at you in the pulpit as well as out of it. My advice was always given in a gentle and conciliating manner; and I, who can not accuse myself of any neglect or inattention, in the world; who never suffered them to be alone together without watching them:—never allowed David to gaze upon her, nor Kate to help him to any thing at table, lest it should lead to improper familiarity between them, have much more right to be angry with her, than you, who, with all your *rebukes and exhortations,* have many and

"many times sent them to pick strawber-
"ries for you, whilst you were dosing in
"the summer-house over your pipe; and
"even made them read plays together.—
"Nay, did you not once insist upon it that
"David should turn the story of Lavinia,
"in Thomson's Seasons, into Greek;
"and then made him recite it before Kate
"in the midst of Farmer Wells's barley-
"field?"

"How often have I entreated you," said the Parson, "never to revive that circum-
"stance in my recollection? Does it not
"recal the *anguish* which I felt, when,
"with a degree of ferocity which I had
"not imagined could exist in a female
"who has, for so many years, lived in
"communion with a man of such tender
"sensibilities as myself, you hanged my
"favourite dog, *Veto!* Was it not in the

"same evening, the twenty-fourth of "August, a season more melancholy to "me on that account, than for being the "anniversary of the tremendous massa- "cre on the day of St. Bartholomew!"

"Sir Philip," continued the Doctor, for a moment forgetting the loss of his daughter, in that of his dog, *Veto*, "you have "probably heard of the circumstance be- "fore:"—"Yes," interrupted the lady, "and of the phrenzy which followed it, "even exceeding that which we have just "now witnessed:—this pious divine, Sir "Philip, revenged the loss of a little "troublesome cur, which I put out of the "way, because he killed my chickens and "worried the ducks continually, and did a "great deal of mischief besides:—this pa- "tient Christian pastor, as he often calls "himself, took out his penknife and cut the

"throat of my portrait which hung over the "parlour chimney; and thus left a lasting "monument of the *tender sensibilities* of "which you have just heard him boast."

"Sir Philip," said the Doctor, "regard "not the voice of that troublesome wo-"man. Alas! I am an unfortunate man: "my cup is mingled with gall: where I "look for comfort I find provocation, and "instead of happiness, disappointment. "Did I not think of devoting this even-"ing to the composition of an epithala-"mium, which that Welch boy (for, con-"found him, he is a good scholar,—I am "ashamed that I made him so) should "have spoken upon your marriage with "my daughter."

Sir Philip could scarcely refrain from laughing. "Do hold your foolish tongue," said the Doctor's wife, "talk no more "nonsense, I beseech you."

"Only one word more, my dear Baro-
"net," said the Doctor; "if they are
"not married, Kate shall still be yours;
"she dare not disobey my commands:—
"if she presume to oppose a father's will,
"let her be Anathema Maranatha."

Sir Philip could no longer preserve the composure of his muscles; and, therefore, after shaking hands with the exasperated divine, and telling him that he should be happy to see him at Blackwood Hall, when he was more tranquil, stepped into his coach and returned home.

This disappointment being rather whimsical than serious, in a short time Sir Philip used to relate an account of it, for the purpose of amusing his friends; and the reverend Doctor rolling on the grass plat, with the Greek Litany of anathemas, is still a favourite anecdote in the neighbourhood.

Sir Philip English appears to have cultivated his estate, visited the neighbouring gentry, fulfilled the duties of a magistrate, and officiated as foreman of the grand jury at the assizes, for several years, without manifesting any disposition to enter into the bonds of wedlock.

However, about the period when he had completed his forty-sixth year, the death of a favourite nephew, to whom his estate would otherwise have descended, influenced him to wish that there had been some other heir to his estate rather than Jack English, the next brother of the deceased. He was directly opposite in manners and behaviour to the excellent youth whose loss was severely felt by his whole family; and though he possessed a good understanding, and much generosity, he was so dissipated, careless, and extravagant, that

the descent of the family honours upon him seemed to be their consignment to oblivion, if not disgrace.

Sir Philip, therefore, once more looked around in search of a partner to share his fortune, and accept and perpetuate his name. Just at this period, he was induced, from motives of friendship, to pay a visit of condolence to the widow of a deceased friend, who, by a fall from his horse in hunting, had fractured his skull, and died in a few days, in consequence of the accident.

He found the lady in great affliction, as might naturally be expected on such an occasion; for she had always borne an excellent character, and apparently lived in the greatest happiness with her deceased husband. Her youngest child was an infant, not yet twelve months old, and the elder about two years and a half.

The sight of the widow in tears, and particularly of her helpless little ones so suddenly deprived of their father, who was in the prime of life, sensibly affected Sir Philip; and when he offered his assistance on any occasion, in which he could promote her interest or comfort, he was entirely prompted by the generosity of his feelings, independent of every other consideration.

Having, however, repeated his visit, in consequence of the acceptance of his proffered services, frequent opportunities of conversing with the agreeable widow had such an effect upon the mind of the Baronet, that he imperceptibly acquired a sincere regard for her; insomuch, as to determine him to make her an offer of his hand and fortune, as soon as a decent period of widowhood had elapsed.

As the widow was left in affluent circumstances, and her children amply provided for, Sir Philip felt no more anticipation of disappointment on this occasion, than he had done when he addressed himself to the old Rector. If, however, he lost his first chance of a wife, by entertaining too high an opinion of his influence over the lady and her family, he lost the second by too great a degree of diffidence: for whilst he was balancing in his own mind, whether the intimacy with the widow entitled him to disclose his sentiments on such a subject earlier than another man; or whether that intimacy did not impose upon him the necessity of a greater degree of restraint, and render it the more proper that he should defer his intended addresses, at least until the expiration of that period which custom

has usually established for the duration of mourning;—the widow, having fewer scruples, decided for herself. One morning as Sir Philip was riding through the village, at the extremity of which the mansion of the widow was situated, the bells struck up a merry peal, and the Baronet being induced to inquire the occasion of it, was surprized by the intelligence that his intended bride had that morning bestowed her hand upon a superannuated naval officer.

This old fellow, who, to use the expression of Sir Philip, had nothing to support him but a wooden leg and half-pay, having none of the Baronet's hesitation or delicacy (indeed it must be confessed, that, as he was only a slight acquaintance of the widow, he had no right to them), had boldly preferred his suit the first time he saw the

lady after the death of her husband, and carried off a rich prize in the sight of the enemy, notwithstanding his superior advantages.

It would be to deny the reality of Sir Philip's passion, if it should be asserted that he was indifferent about the disposal of the widow. He certainly was not: for he had a sincere affection for her, founded on a long established good opinion of her virtue, integrity and prudence. But he did not blame himself for having fully proved the grounds of that favourable opinion, before he united himself to her for life: and he concluded, with some other old-fashioned persons of the last age, that when a first husband is so very soon forgotten, his successor has no great right to flatter himself that he shall experience greater constancy of affection. He there-

fore, by degrees, reconciled himself to the loss of the widow. Indeed, he felt less regret at his second disappointment, than he had done on the former occasion; for the sprightly lass, who had eloped from her father's house at seventeen, proved a very good wife; but the discreet widow, who, during the life of her first husband, had always maintained a reputation for superior decorum and propriety, became, in the end, a very termagant; and the poor Captain often cursed his precipitation, and declared that he would sooner expose himself to the broadside of a first-rate man of war, than a single volley from his wife's tongue.

But although Sir Philip English had been thus, by two very extraordinary accidents, driven from the altar of Hymen, and lost, by reiterated disappointment,

all inclination for matrimony, he was not insensible to the influence of female charms; and notwithstanding he escaped the grosser consequences of his amours, a pretty *brunette*, who lived in a cottage on Hitchfield Common, was often the companion of his leisure hours. However, age, at length, crept on him; and the Baronet becoming less regular in his visits to Sally, and, perhaps, less bountiful in his presents, when he did visit her, Sally, in order to console herself for his neglect, and to avoid the sneers of some of her neighbours, who often addressed her with the title of *my Lady*, marched off with the serjeant of a recruiting party, and left Sir Philip to perambulate his woods alone, or to fill up his evenings with his bottle, which Sally had for some time been disposed to look upon as her most formidable rival in the Baronet's affections.

Blackwood Hall, which had undergone but few alterations during more than half a century, was a commodious mansion. The Baronet's father and grandfather had resided in it, and left a name behind them for hospitality and good neighbourhood, which Sir Philip endeavoured to perpetuate, by an imitation of those qualities which had endeared his ancestors to the inhabitants of the district.

In this he succeeded so well, that there was not a country squire, within thirty miles, nor even a casual traveller, whose appearance entitled him to be received into a gentleman's house, who was ever at a loss for a dinner, when within reach of Blackwood.

Nor was it often necessary for them, on such occasions, even to ring at the gate; for as the Baronet always made it his daily

practice, unless when he had been out either hunting or coursing, to walk for a quarter of an hour before the dinner-bell rang, upon the terrace, in front of the house, and within sight of the turnpike road;—if any one passing by, looked at the house with an eye of curiosity or attention, or appeared to Sir Philip as if he had leisure to halt, he was sure of an immediate invitation; and so earnest was the Baronet, on such occasions, to display his hospitality, that he might be said *to go out into the highways and hedges* in search of guests; *and compel them to come in.*

Such were the prominent features of a character, with which, it is presumed, the reader will not be displeased to become better acquainted; for we can assure him that the company of Sir Philip English

was generally sought for, by the inhabitants of the neighbourhood in which he lived, and who never thought their company complete, if the Baronet did not make one of the party.

CHAPTER III.

It would be an act of injustice to the reader, as well as to the sister of Sir Philip English, not to add a sketch of her history to what has been already said, or rather written, respecting her brother.

Mrs. Burrows was introduced at the beginning of the volume in a light perhaps not the most favourable for viewing her character to advantage. She was represented as a female disputant, apt and even eager for contradiction.

This, indeed, is not a very amiable picture; but, if viewed with coolness and impartiality, it will be admitted that it might have been much more disgusting.

However, without endeavouring to exculpate the lady from the charge of loquacity, and even on some occasions of a pertinacious adherence to her own opinions, the reader will be pleased to balance these disadvantages, by placing in the opposite scale her extensive information on all subjects connected with domestic economy, and whatever belongs to the improvement of the female mind.

It can not be denied, that possessing, or believing that she possessed, a thorough insight into these important affairs, and moreover, having stored her mind and memory with all that literary lore which is to be obtained by a perusal of novels and romances, and those publications which relate to public amusements, such as the descriptions given periodically of court-dresses, balls, routs, fêtes, masquerades,

and the thousand heterogeneous amusements of a fashionable, or as Sir Philip English, in spite of his sister's opinion, would persist in calling it, a frivolous and inconsistent age; it can not be denied, that with all these advantages, real or supposed, she is entitled to some excuse for occasionally contradicting a country gentleman, who, to repeat her own phrase, although he seldom looked into a book, unless his Family Bible or the Racing Calendar, would still undertake to maintain an argument respecting the blunders of a minister of state, or to prove, what he called the absurdity of a lady's sitting by the fire-side, in the day-time, wrapped in Siberian furs, and going abroad at midnight dressed in transparent muslin, fashioned *à la Grecque.*

Mrs. Burrows, who was perfectly acquainted with such matters, for as she

used to say, "whoever properly under-"stands dress, must necessarily know "something of commerce; and whoever "is acquainted with commerce, can not "be totally ignorant of the laws of na-"tions, and the relative interest of Go-"vernment," never was at a loss for words to defend the ministry, or to justify the cause of fashion, particularly in whatever related to her own sex; and thus wasted many precious hours, which she could have desired to employ in adding to her immense stock of reading, in vain endeavours to make her brother Sir Philip at least yield to her the palm of superiority on those topics.

The misfortune was, that the Baronet could never be completely discomfited. He never acknowledged a defeat; and at every fresh onset, renewed the charge as

if the last battle had made no impression whatever.

The only triumph which his sister enjoyed, was therefore in recounting to her visitors, how she had attempted to subdue her brother: or if no visitors happened to come to Blackwood Hall, by repeating the muster-roll of her arguments to her maids, when she retired to her own apartment.

In the management of the domestic concerns of the household, Sir Philip never interfered: he sometimes turned away a footman for impertinence, or a stable-boy for neglecting his horses; but in all other particulars committed the management of the affairs of his establishment to Mrs. Burrows and her deputies, the steward and housekeeper.

Mrs. Burrows was about seven years

older than the Baronet. She had once been handsome; and still possessed the advantages of a good figure, and what is usually called amongst the ladies, a genteel carriage.

Early in life she had distinguished herself, not only from her sisters, but from the rest of the young ladies in the neighbourhood of her father's seat, by the extent of her memory; having, by way of a voluntary task, learned by heart the whole of Milton's Paradise Lost.

Afterwards she abandoned poetry for prose; for, as she herself acknowledged, she had got such a habit of remembering all she read, that she was fearful of not being able to express herself, even on ordinary occasions, but in verse. She therefore attempted to drive some of the poetry out of her head by prosaic compositions.

From the ancient tales of witches and fairies, to the modern romances of desert islands and haunted castles: from the somewhat more authentic chronicles and annals of Hollingshed and Strype, down to *The Mysteries of Udolpho*, *The Forest of Comalva*, and *The Black Spirit of the Wye*; she had perused every line, which wit or dulness, a desire of fame, or a wish for profit, had produced, in the shape of novel or romance.

Whilst her mind was thus improved, it became eccentric. She imperceptibly acquired a volubility of expression which was astonishing even to herself: and if she could have properly arranged the materials, she had certainly laid in a stock sufficient not only to have re-furnished the Alexandrian library, but that immense collection which has been of late years stolen from the Vatican.

Unfortunately, however, the mass became more and more confused as it increased in bulk. Her memory was a vast warehouse, destitute of order or assortment:—the contents were preserved, indeed, but not improved; they did not perish; but they were sometimes impaired by being jumbled together: indeed, to pursue the metaphor, the collection resembled that of the celebrated shopkeeper in Leadenhall Street, who always opened his packages just as they had been set down in his shop; never arranged any of the articles, but made confusion, worse confounded, by throwing one parcel over another, in order to find what he happened to want. Just such was the store-room of Miss Arabella English's brain.

Her father, Sir Hugh, was remarkably fond of her, and although her mother was

living, Miss Arabella usually presided at the dinner table, and had the principal management of the domestic arrangements.

The reader will not, perhaps, be surprized to learn, that although Miss English had many admirers, or in other words, that there were many gentlemen who visited at her father's mansion, disposed to make very civil, very polite, and even some tender speeches to the young lady;—there was not found among them one who had sufficient regárd for her; or, perhaps, who possessed sufficient courage to offer himself, seriously, on the footing of a lover.

Miss Arabella was conscious of the reason of it herself; and used to say, that men generally talked so much nonsense in courtship, that they were always ashamed when they found that what they said was

sufficiently attended to, to occasion a reply. That they knew she had a good memory, and was not deficient in expression, and were therefore afraid to approach her.

Be this as it may, whether she might have been disposed to say too little or too much, or too much to the purpose, to those who could have wished to become her admirers,—it is certain that she remained single till the age of thirty, when an accidental circumstance procured her a husband.

Sir Hugh English had been accustomed to visit the Isle of Wight, with his family, every summer. He had purchased a cottage in the neighbourhood of West Cowes, and fitted it up with great taste and elegance.

Whilst he resided there, it was his constant custom, at every convenient opportu-

nity, to mix with the company who resorted to the place; for he was not one of those who abstain from shewing civility to his neighbours, lest he should have too many visitors. On the contrary, Sir Hugh endeavoured by a generous display of hospitality, to render the place where he resided pleasant to every one, who was induced either by business or pleasure to visit it: and enjoyed more satisfaction from imparting to others a share of the good things which had fallen to his own lot, than he could have derived from the exclusive possession of them; besides the reciprocity of good offices and civility to which he thus became entitled; and which, whether he drew from the stock or not, he considered as so much property laid up in the bank of happiness.

After the death of Sir Hugh, Ballard

Cottage became the property of his relict, and she occasionally resided there for several months in the year, with her daughters. On the decease of Lady English, Sir Philip succeeded to it, and as the utmost harmony always prevailed between the Baronet and his sisters, they used to resort to it in the summer, as they had been accustomed to do, in the life of their father and mother.

It happened that at one of the balls which are occasionally given by the officers at Cowes, Miss English was present. Amongst the company was a genteel young man, who had the appearance of being an entire stranger: and as the assembly at that time was not dignified by a master of the ceremonies, the gentleman being unknown, seemed to be excluded almost from the hope of procuring a part-

ner for the dances which were about to commence.

Sir Philip English, observing that the stranger appeared mortified at thus being compelled to remain an idle spectator,—with that urbanity which always distinguished him even from the beginning of his life to the end of it,—approached, and asked him if he did not intend dancing.

The gentleman politely replied, that having no acquaintance with any lady in the room, he felt it very aukward to introduce himself.

" My sister is not engaged," said the Baronet: " favour me with your name, " and I will present you to her."

The stranger announced his name, and he was accordingly introduced by Sir Philip to Miss English; and became her partner during the whole of the evening. He

danced remarkably well, and was so attentive in helping her to refreshments, and what was still more pleasing,—applauded her remarks upon the dress of the ladies and appearance of the gentlemen, with so much politeness, that she would not have changed her partner on any account.

Besides he was as well dressed as any man in the room; and, at least in the eye of Miss Arabella, who called herself a judge on such subjects, incomparably the handsomest.

When the ball was over, the stranger handed Miss English to her brother's coach, which was in waiting; and Sir Philip, with his usual frankness and good-nature;—which qualities when mixed in *due* proportion, form a compound very nearly allied to politeness,—immediately invited the gentleman to step into the carriage,

and accompany them to Ballard Cottage, "where" added the Baronet, "you shall "drink a glass of as good Burgundy, as "ever you tasted in your life."

The stranger, like a well-bred man, accepted the invitation, without hesitation or reluctance, and with the same sort of freedom with which it was offered: he had been entertained very agreeably by the vivacity of his partner, during the evening; and he thought he could not do better than by closing it with a bumper of Burgundy.

The Baronet performed his promise: the wine was excellent; and, in flavour, would have done credit to the cellar of Beauvais himself.

Sir Philip was so well pleased with the conversation of his new acquaintance, that it was almost day-light before he would

permit him to return to his lodgings; and the next day, when he called to pay the usual compliments to his partner, to express his hopes that she was recovered from the fatigue of the ball; and had taken no cold, and the like;—the Baronet detained him to dinner; and, to use his own words, "in order to avoid the *trouble* of ceremo-"ny," told him, that he should always find a knife and fork at his table, whenever he was not better engaged, and would favour him with his company, during his abode in the Isle of Wight.

The stranger occasionally availed himself of this hospitable invitation; but in such a manner as to evince, that in his compliance with the wishes of the Baronet, he was actuated by a desire to oblige, and not by any mean or selfish motive.

With regard to Miss English, he neither

sought for any opportunity of giving himself a figure in her eye, nor paid any particular attentions to her, more than to her younger sisters; much less did he aspire to the hope of an alliance with a person so much his superior by birth and station.

It is true, he paid a becoming deference to her opinions, and often said handsome things to her, upon her taste and judgment: but these she considered to be justly due to her; and received them as a customary homage, and by no means indicative of any particular sentiments of partiality on his side.

Her sisters, indeed, often rallied Miss Arabella, about her handsome partner; but neither they, nor he, had any idea of the effects which his regular, uniform, and unaffected attentions had made upon her mind.

Miss Arabella, who had read all the various accounts which have been committed to print, on the nature of the tender passion, and knew it by description as well as she could have known a lion or a lily, provided she had never seen either of them but on paper, now perceived an alteration in herself which she could not account for; and felt that she could neither look upon the stranger with the same indifference, with which she had, at first, conversed with him, nor bear his absence, without some degree of anxiety,—without, in some measure, connecting the idea of his safety with her own happiness.

She was not a novice; and as she was too proud to dissemble her feelings, so was she also too prudent to avow them unnecessarily.

The line of conduct, which she there-

fore pursued, was such as might have enabled any person, endowed with a moderate share of penetration, to have discovered her real sentiments; but without affording the slightest grounds for attributing to her either prudery or affectation.

It was not until some time afterwards, that the stranger perceived the progress which he was making in her good opinion; but he had too much honour to take any unbecoming advantage of her partiality in his favour; and too much good sense and discretion to aspire to a connexion to which he foresaw an insuperable difficulty, in the objections which he anticipated on the part of the Baronet, and the rest of the lady's family.

At length, however, the time approached, at which he was to take leave of the friendly Sir Philip, the delights of Ballard

Cottage, and the Garden of England, in which he had passed his time so agreeably.

The evening before his intended departure, he called to drink tea at the cottage; and if he had been inclined to have embraced an opportunity of declaring those sentiments which, for the reason before-mentioned, he wished rather to conceal; or of coming to an explanation of what he had no occasion to inquire,—the real state and condition of Miss English's heart, such an one now presented itself. Sir Philip was gone with a party of his friends to dine on board the Royal Sovereign, then lying at St. Helens; and the younger branches of the family were on a tour through the island, and not expected at Cowes for several days; so that, if he had desired a tête-à-tête with Miss English this seemed a most auspicious moment.

But, whatever might be his wishes, he had entertained no such intention; nor had there been any thing in his manner which could have indicated peculiar uneasiness at the approaching separation. Not so with Miss English: she calculated every hour as bringing her nearer to the period when the white sails of the packet, in which her handsome partner was to be conveyed from Vecta's shores, should be hoisted to the gale. She thought that she perceived a tenderness in his manner, which bespoke a lover's solicitude to cultivate the favour of his mistress: but not one word had ever escaped him, which could be construed into an avowal or proof of such a sentiment.

Arabella, however, believed that her own mind was constituted *in a manner very different from* that of other young

women. She felt, or thought she felt, a vast degree of superiority; and, like other eccentrics, believed that she had a right to act *in a manner very different from* the generality of the world, without incurring the imputation of impropriety.

When her visitor arrived, she was employed, as usual, in reading a novel, and on his coming into the room immediately presented him with the book; and desired him to peruse the section at which she had folded down a leaf.

It was a description of two persons having a mutual regard for each other, but who had each a secret reason for not disclosing the sentiment. In the novel, the advantages of birth and fortune were on the side of the man.

He was at no loss to perceive the intention of Arabella, in having submitted the

passage to his perusal. He looked stedfastly at her, and with great respect, closing the book at the same time, said: "I "am not insensible, Madam, to the ho-"nour and happiness of having conversed "with you, and, I flatter myself, acquired "your good opinion; but, indeed, this "lesson was unnecessary, to one who feels "all which it describes; under, however, "a reverse of circumstances, which ren-"ders it impossible for him to hope for so "happy a conclusion as that which is "described in the novel.

"There are circumstances, Madam, "which render it imprudent, nay, im-"possible, for me to say what I could de-"sire to have expressed on this occasion: "but, be assured, that I am incapable of "acting so dishonourably as to subject

"you to proposals which it would be an "insult for me to make.

"Allow me, also, to assure you, that "neither time nor absence can efface the "regard and attachment which I feel; "but the only method of proving that I "am worthy of a continuance of your "favourable opinion, is by flying from a "place in which I can no longer conceal "the feelings which I dare not avow."

He made a low, and very graceful, bow, and immediately quitted the house.

Miss English neither could upbraid him with insensibility, nor would blame herself for having brought about a disclosure, which, it was evident, would not have been voluntarily made.

Although it was late when the Baronet reached the cottage, as he knew that his friend was to leave Cowes the next day he

was a little disappointed to find that he had taken leave so soon, and was beginning to express some displeasure that his sister had not detained him, until his return from St. Helen's, — when a letter was brought in by the servant, to announce that it was his intention to have postponed his departure, for the purpose of thanking Sir Philip for his kind hospitality; but, that he had received, by express, an account of the dangerous illness of a relation, which, he trusted, would be a sufficient excuse for having omitted that which he felt it to be an act of duty to perform.

"He is as good a fellow as ever I met "with," said the Baronet; "I hope his "relation is worth the risque he runs in "crossing the water this stormy night; "and that he will get a good legacy to "reward him for his courage; for, by

" my soul, I would not even go to dine " on board the ship of a lord high ad- " miral in such weather as this, if I had " known what a *roughish* gale, as the " sailors vouchsafe to call it, would have " blown to night."

This information, coupled with her brother's remark, was not at all calculated to allay the anxiety of Miss Arabella, on the present occasion; and she took an early opportunity of retiring to her chamber; but, instead of attempting to compose herself to rest, read over and over the account of Narcissa, and the shipwreck of Roderick Random.

CHAPTER IV.

At the commencement of the ensuing winter, Miss English and her sisters received a pressing invitation from a relation of their mother, to pass a few weeks with her in London.

She was the widow of a Turkey merchant, and being left in very affluent circumstances, kept her coach and a handsome establishment, but, without quitting her house in Broad-street, where her deceased husband had formerly acquired the means of supporting her in so much splendor.

Young ladies, immured in the country almost continually, seldom want many entreaties to prevail upon them to take a

journey to London. Miss English, though not young, was, perhaps, the more desirous of visiting the metropolis at this time, because, although the handsome stranger had never once mentioned the name of the street in which he lived, she knew that he was an inhabitant of the metropolis: and therefore, although the chances of seeing him during her stay in town scarcely admitted a conjecture, much less a calculation, she yet hoped that Fortune, by one of those unaccountable tricks which she sometimes plays, might possibly throw him in her way.

She had, moreover, the satisfaction of an opportunity to add, by considerable purchases, which she never failed to make whenever she visited the metropolis, to her immense collection of novels and romances.

During her visit to Mrs. Senac, that lady had received tickets for a ball at the Mansion-House, which she resolved to attend, and insisted that the Misses English should accompany herself and daughter.

This circumstance revived the idea of the handsome stranger in the minds of her sisters (from whom she had sedulously concealed all the thoughts of her heart, on the same subject) and they rallied her on the chance of meeting with him again on this occasion.

Mrs. Senac, who had as much curiosity as any elderly lady in the whole city of London, was very desirous of knowing the particulars of the affair, and on the adventure being related, gravely remarked, that she did not think there was any thing in it, to subject her cousin to the ridicule of any body; as it appeared, even from

the confession of the young ladies themselves, that the gentleman was both handsome and polite. She said that she hoped, if he should be thrown in the way of Miss English again, that she would not be deterred by any reflexions of her sisters from accepting him for a partner, although he had not presented them with his pedigree or his rent-roll.

"Indeed," said the old lady bridling up, "there are many rich men in this city "who would be unwilling to have it "known that they had been present at a "country hop; and, perhaps, Miss Ca-"roline English," (for that was the name of the second daughter) "you yourself might "not be sorry to meet with an offer from "a fifty thousand pound man, with good "credit upon 'Change, although your "brother is a Baronet."

"Madam," said Miss Arabella, "I feel
"myself honoured by your advice at any
"time; but I assure you that I want no
"prompting to induce me to follow my
"own inclinations on such an occasion.
"My sisters may rally me as much as
"they please:—they are, perhaps, a lit-
"tle jealous of the preference which this
"handsome man, as they call him, has
"thought proper to shew towards your
"humble servant: but this is very natu-
"ral, and very well known, for it is de-
"scribed over and over again, in many
"excellent novels which I have read, and
"which may, perhaps, have fallen into
"your own hands. I forgive them with
"all my heart; and, the only revenge
"which I intend to take, shall be to
"marry this same handsome man, if he

"should ever think it worth his while to "make me an offer.

"With respect to his family, I shall "not object to him if he be not sprung "from Attila the Hun; no, not even if "he were without father, without mo-"ther, without descent at all. I am of "opinion, that, although happiness may "sometimes depend on a decent compe-"tency, it is seldom increased by great "riches, and never by a coat of arms."

Here the conversation terminated; and the ladies retired to their respective apartments, to dress for the ball.

Among the multitudinous articles of female dress, useful and ornamental, required on such an occasion, there is scarcely any more necessary, in order to prepare for dancing, than—a pair of shoes:—and, these happened to have been forgotten by

Miss English. She had been all that day, and, indeed, for the greater part of the preceding week, either assisting others by her counsel, or inventing a variety of tasteful decorations suitable to the occasion. Unfortunately, however, she suffered her attention to this important business to be interrupted for full two hours by the romance of *Diapombosculis,*—which had just made its appearance, and attracted her notice by the terrific frontispiece attached to it, and displayed in all its horrors, at the very next window to that of the shop at which she was about to have purchased a pair of finely embroidered shoes.

She hastily pulled the string, descended from her carriage, and was so much entranced by the wonders of the work, the murderous scenes of blood and slaugh-

ter, and the pomp of horror which it most admirably displayed, that she became an immediate purchaser, but could not quit the shop, until she had nearly finished the perusal of the book, and, thus engaged, forgot the ball and the embroidered shoes.

To supply this deficiency, a servant was dispatched in great haste to the nearest shoemaker, with directions for him to attend at Mrs. Senac's immediately, with some of the most fashionable articles used on such occasions.

Mrs. Senac was a lady of so much consequence in her own opinion, and even in the estimation of that ward of the city in which she lived, where she was generally known, if not universally respected, as the leader of fashions, and the exemplar of magnificence, that the master of the shop immediately attended in his own

person, with an elegant assortment of the articles required.

Miss English was in her dressing room, attended by her maid servant. Mrs. Senac had left the apartment only a moment before the arrival of the shoemaker. He was immediately admitted,—when, who can imagine the mutual astonishment of Miss Arabella and Mr: Burrows, at a meeting so unexpected!

The lady had sufficient presence of mind to send her servant out of the room immediately, under some pretext or other; and then with a degree of composure which she would not have possessed, but for the aid of her recollection, which instantaneously furnished her with a number of similar incidents,—said: "We are both "very foolish to be so much confused, Mr. "Burrows: I hope you are well; but,

"this is not a proper time for explanation.
"I am going to the Mansion-House ball,
"and as you are a citizen, though you
"were too proud to acknowledge it, per-
"haps you will be there also."

Poor Burrows was so much confused, that he was almost incapacitated from making any reply. "For heaven's sake, "my dear Miss English! most admirable "of women! let me entreat your forgive- "ness:—it never was my intention to be "guilty of dissimulation; but— but—"

"You are not married," said Arabella, almost ready to faint. "No! No!" exclaimed Burrows still more confused:— "do not wrong me by supposing me ca- "pable of ——" "There is no time "for parley," interrupted Miss Arabella; "Mrs. Senac will be with us in a mo- "ment; and I hear the maid on the

"stairs. Withdraw, this instant,—you "know whither I am going."

Burrows was almost petrified with astonishment; and unable to arrange his ideas so as to give them utterance. He remained, for a minute or two, immoveable; but perceiving the door opening, made his bow, and ran down stairs, leaving the whole bundle of shoes on the table, exactly as he had brought them from home.

"Where is the man going in such a "fluster?" muttered Jane to herself, as she entered the dressing-room: "he was "very near pushing me down stairs."

"He has made some mistake, I sup-"pose," said Arabella, assuming an air of as much indifference as she could; "but "let us examine the parcel."

On opening it, Miss English, who was now more anxious to get to the Mansion-

House, than fastidious about the ornaments of her person, saving for the purpose of doing honour to the choice of her partner, soon fixed upon a pair of shoes of dove-coloured sattin, embroidered with silver; which, although they did not exactly fit, were, she thought, by far the prettiest she had ever seen.

Mrs. Senac, her daughter, and the young ladies, being now ready to accompany her, they proceeded to the Mansion-House.

Miss English was, at that period, a handsome woman; and a commanding figure, added to her natural *hauteur*, rendered her conspicuous in every company.

After much labour and fatigue, and innumerable interruptions from the pressure of the crowd, Mrs. Senac and her party arrived at the ball-room. The old lady

was the best person in the world to be the leader on such an occasion. She had naturally a masculine spirit, was never intimidated at imaginary difficulties, and seldom dismayed by real danger; and knew nothing, by experience, of those delicate sensibilities which perpetually disturb the pleasure, and interrupt the enjoyment of the company in large parties, by fainting fits, and vapourish affectation.

In stature, she was above the common standard, and as she advanced in years, had grown amazingly corpulent: but her limbs being naturally strong, she still possessed a considerable degree of activity, and bustled through the throng, by which the staircase was crowded, with less discomposure, than most of the ladies at the ball.

Miss English, who had walked imme-

diately behind her Amazonian, or perhaps, rather, Patagonian friend,—was, by the very laws of motion, protected from the immediate pressure of the surrounding crowd, and thus escaped the inconveniences and accidents which many of the company, and amongst them Miss Margaret English, and Miss Priscilla Senac, unfortunately experienced. The former of these ladies was nearly deprived of her head-dress, by a rude fellow who seized hold of a flying lappet, as she passed by him; and she was afterwards unable to adjust it, so as to be at all comfortable during the evening:—and Miss Senac, not only had her gown torn, but actually lost one of her shoes, so as to be precluded the possibility of dancing,—an amusement of which she was remarkably fond.

The weather was rather warm, even

out of doors; and the assemblage of persons in the ball-room and adjacent apartments so numerous, that in half an hour after the dancing had commenced, the company was almost suffocated by the heat.

Mrs. Senac, who possessed a greater fondness for finery, than is, perhaps, quite becoming in a lady of her years, either disregarded the effect of the climate, which she was to encounter, or, perhaps, thought that the company would shrink from the resplendent blaze of her appearance, and thus leave a cooler atmosphere around her, so that she should experience less of the heat, in consequence of appearing to be the focus from which it was disseminated.

Perhaps she had read the opinion of a celebrated astronomer, who supposes that the sun itself is a body even colder than ice: and, by parity of reasoning, might

persuade herself, that the hotter she *appeared* in the sight of others, she should be, in *reality*, so much the cooler. Be this as it may, whether influenced by philosophy or fancy, or astronomical or solar analogy, or by some other less elevated notion, such as borrowing the comparison between the flaming piony or dazzling sunflower and the chilling snow-drop, which, notwithstanding their difference of appearance, are exactly of the same temperature; so it was, that she appeared at the ball-room to the terror of some, and the admiration of many, in a rich dress of marigold-coloured sattin, covered with a net of silver foil; a head-dress of immense height, with a profusion of diamonds; and wearing an aigrette of sapphires, rubies, and emeralds.

After this description, it is almost super-

fluous to add, that she shone conspicuous even at my Lord Mayor's ball.

The company, it has been already stated, was unusually numerous on this occasion; for the chief magistrate happened to have acquired great popularity; and although the Mansion-House is seldom deserted at a city feast, whatsoever may have been the official conduct of the Lord Mayor, the office had been filled in such a manner as to give general satisfaction to all parties, who willingly testified their respect for his Lordship by devouring his provisions with the greatest assiduity.

Heliogabalus might himself have blushed if he had seen the immense profusion of viands collected from every part of the globe, even from the Frozen Ocean and both the Tropics, to swell the catalogue of dainties provided for the feast. But, if

that renowned emperor had been seated at the right hand of proud London's proud Lord Mayor,—and had witnessed the display of truly British appetite, by a set of comely personages in mazarine gowns, his surprise at the quantity of provisions would have given place to apprehensions, lest there should be nothing left for the rest of the company: or, perhaps, he would have made the same mistake as that which is related of the celebrated Omai, who, on a similar occasion, inquired if the men in blue robes had *false bellies*; really imagining that they were specially appointed to clear the table of the provisions, that nothing might be lost.

The ball was opened by his late Royal Highness the Duke of ——— and the Lady Mayoress; and, as many persons of great distinction were present, the city

ladies were extremely anxious for the moment when country dances should begin, that they might "trip it on the light fan-" tastic toe," in their very best manner; for as Mrs. Senac said to the young ladies, before they left Broad Street, "who can "possibly tell what may be the conse-" quences of a ball? It often brings per-" sons together, who might otherwise "never have met; and lays the founda-" tion for alliances which might never "have been thought of."

Several gentlemen, attracted by the blaze of Mrs. Senac's jewels, and supposing Miss English in some degree connected with so much wealth, requested the honour of dancing with her; b t she made a variety of excuses, and evaded their importunity, although not without some difficulty, particularly as Mrs. Senac repeatedly commended the elegance

of one, and the dress of another, among the different beaus who solicited the honour of Miss Arabella's hand, and who invariably complimented the old lady in passing, as she kept close to Miss English, and they therefore naturally supposed her to stand in some degree of relationship to the lady whom they addressed.

Miss Caroline English was soon engaged; but, her partner was so aukward, and distorted himself by a thousand gesticulations so ridiculously, that she was heartily tired of him; and almost determined to sit down, as soon as the first dance was over.

Poor Miss Margaret was compelled to remain a sedentary spectator, on account of the loss she had sustained in ascending the staircase to the ball-room; and Miss Priscilla Senac danced with a very corpu-

lent gentleman, who, twirled her about with so much velocity, that she was almost killed by the heat.

After two or three dances had been gone through, and Miss English had abandoned almost all hopes of seeing Mr. Burrows, who, she had supposed, would gladly avail himself of such an opportunity of conversing with her; and, just as she had brought her mind into a condition for believing that, in the agitation of the moment, she had not spoken distinctly enough for him to have heard where she might be found,—two gentlemen approached her;—one of them an eminent solicitor, who occasionally visited Mrs. Senac, and the other a person so very *outré* in his appearance, that she was astonished when, on his being introduced as Lord Kilberry, his lordship requested

that she would do him the great honour of going down a dance with him.

It was impossible to conceive him ignorant of the ridicule to which he would thus render himself liable; and the particular observation to which it would also expose his partner. But Miss English, whose romantic imagination was an excellent substitute for the courage requisite to encounter the eyes of every person in the room, on such an occasion, would have been more than half inclined to comply with his lordship's request, at the first word, if she had not still entertained a faint hope that she had yet some chance of a much *handsomer partner*.

It will be very provoking, said she in her own mind, if Burrows should arrive just as I am preparing to lead this ape down the dance. The very thought gave

an additional stimulus to her eccentric fancy; and as his Lordship very earnestly repeated his solicitations, she said,—with a significant smile at Mrs. Senac, who could scarcely refrain from laughing, that having refused several partners, she was afraid it might not be perfectly correct for her to accept the honour which his Lordship intended her; but, as her own name had not been announced to either of them, she still thought herself at liberty to take one dance with his Lordship, particularly at the instance of Mrs. Senac's friend.

Lord Kilberry bowed very low, and drawing on his gloves, gallantly handed his partner to her proper place, ready for the commencement of the ensuing dance.

Every eye was immediately fixed on the extraordinary couple, and the self complacence and effrontery with which the

little lord sustained their glances was not more surprising than the air of indifference assumed by Miss Arabella, who, instead of giving way to any improper levity of manner, which might have countenanced the idea that she intended to exhibit her partner as an object of ridicule, or to that *mauvaise honte* which is embarrassed by every look which it does not perfectly comprehend, maintained the utmost degree of composure, and seemed wholly unconscious of any difference between his Lordship and any other gentleman in the room.

With how much difficulty she was enabled to sustain such a conspicuous part in the farce, the reader may, perhaps, better imagine, when he is informed that Lord Kilberry was about four feet two inches high: that is—measuring from

about the tip of his right ear, which, in consequence of his head being forced out of its proper place by the encroachment of the shoulder of the same side, and the proportionable declension of the left arm, was become the apex or superior part of this human pyramid.

Such being the unfortunate twist which had injured the symmetry of his Lordship's figure, the centre of gravity would have been necessarily lost, if nature had not kindly contrived to furnish an equipoise in an immense protuberance in the rear of the shoulder blade, which when viewed at a distance, made him pretty nearly resemble the figure of Æneas in the print in Ogilby's Virgil, where he is represented carrying his father on his back.

A learned anatomist, indeed, who made this very excrescence the subject of a long

dissertation read before a certain society, entertained an opinion which renders this simile remarkably appropriate; for he believed that nature had originally intended the production of a twin brother, who, having been interrupted in his progress towards perfection, had been eventually transferred to his little Lordship, in this identical excrescence, and thus became still *more closely allied* to him.

It must be confessed, however, that this opinion, although supported by many ingenious arguments, was not unanimously received by the society; many of the members being rather inclined to think, agreeable to the notions of that great philosopher and physiologist Lord Monboddo, that the said lump was designed for a tail, but had unfortunately grown in the wrong place.

This sketch of the plan and elevation of Lord Kilberry's upper story would convey a very imperfect idea of the effect produced in viewing his Lordship's features, form, and figure *en masse*, if it were not accompanied by a description of his arms and legs. And here Nature, who, is said to do nothing in vain, had exhibited an example of that impartial distribution of her favours which has been so often celebrated.

For what might have been considered by some, in the light of parsimony with regard to the stature of the noble Lord, was counterbalanced by profusion in the gift of a pair of hands superior in dimensions to those of the eldest son of Anak.

To complete the whole, Nature had kindly diminished the length of the leg on that side which had sprouted up so exube-

rantly at the point of the shoulder, and the heel-bone, which, perhaps, might have raised the figure too much, if it had remained in its usual place, was transferred to the contrary side.

It unfortunately happened on this occasion, as, perhaps, is sometimes the case at other polite assemblies, that those who attended the Lord Mayor's ball were not all philosophers; and the company, instead of balancing the advantages which have been recapitulated in the above sketch, laughed immoderately at the appearance of Lord Kilberry, until his partner was almost infected by the contagion of an example which was followed by almost every one present, with that sort of involuntary alacrity, with which, as the Spectator or some other writer says, if half a dozen men are talking together, and one

speaks of his beard, all the rest immediately put their hand to their chin.

The dance lasted longer than it would otherwise have done, in consequence of the numerous interruptions occasioned by unsuccessful efforts of some of the company to restrain the merriment of each other within the bounds of decorum: and, it was very remarkable; at least, in the opinion of the observant Arabella, who saw every thing, heard every thing, and affected to understand nothing, of what was passing,—that persons of every rank, were on this occasion equally affected by the *cacoethes ridendi;* and seemed alike incapable of commanding their own muscles, whilst they beheld the contortions and distortions of the muscles of Lord Kilberry.

Thus, from the lisping Lord, who, with

vacant and goggling stare, seemed to regard every thing around him with as much surprise as if he had been in Noah's ark, to the prim citizen's youngest booby, who had just emerged from behind the counter, prepared to admire every thing he saw, the universal object of attention was the performance of Miss English and her noble partner.

Even the prime minister, who, danced with a daughter of the Lord Mayor (for a premier can sometimes cut capers; and, has even derived more celebrity from the motion of his heels, than the schemes of his head) was so much entertained with the exhibition, that, he was almost convulsed with that kind of inaudible laughter, which, although it might threaten bad consequences, appeared still less dangerous than if he had expressed his feelings more

openly. For my Lord was not a little choleric, and, if offended, would in all probability have been disposed to shew the agility of his limbs in an exercise not quite so inoffensive as that in which he was then engaged.

The noble Lord and his partner had nearly finished the dance; having arrived within two or three couple of the bottom of the room, when Miss Arabella, happening to turn her head, observed Mr. Burrows in conversation with several gentlemen, who were evidently making themselves very merry at the expense of her partner.

She would have been piqued if she had suffered herself to be prevailed upon to dance with any other person than Lord Kilberry; but assured that the good sense of her admirer, if he did not perceive her

real motive for condescending to indulge the company with so much diversion, would be satisfied that in such a choice she had no intention to excite his jealousy or discourage his advances, was only displeased that she had fatigued herself so much as to be disinclined to dance any longer.

Lord Kilberry conducted Miss Arabella to her seat with great respect; and, in the hearing of Mrs. Senac passed an encomium on her dancing, which she returned by a compliment of the same description, almost equal to the notion entertained by his Lordship of his own merit.

Mr. Burrows now advanced, and, with a very graceful bow, inquired first after her own health, and then after that of her brother and the family.

At the instant he was speaking, Miss Caroline English whispered Mrs. Senac,

"As I live, Madam, here is my sister's "handsome partner!"

Mrs. Senac looked him full in the face, —and, "upon my word Miss Caroline, a very handsome man he is." She had scarcely finished, the sentence before Miss English presented him by the name of Mr. Burrows; and, added:—"This gen- "tleman is a friend of my brother."

Mrs. Senac spoke to him very complaisantly; and Mr. Burrows afterwards paid his respects to Miss Caroline English, and, then returning to Miss Arabella, requested that she would indulge him, by allowing him the honour of filling the place of Lord Kilberry in the succeeding dance.

"I will not absolutely refuse," said she, "but I am so very much fatigued by the "pains I have taken to increase the mirth

" of the company, that, I really wish " you would not press me."

Mrs. Senac, who was still examining every feature in Burrows's face with attention, and preparing herself to deliver an opinion of her cousin's choice at the first convenient opportunity, had contrived to throw so much good-humour and encouragement into her countenance, that he was tempted to address her, occasionally, during the intervals of his conversation with Miss English. Lord Kilberry happened to be standing by, and observing that Mr. Burrows had attracted the notice of Mrs. Senac, asked if Miss English knew that gentleman?

" His name is Burrows," replied Arabella, with her usual frankness, " and " he is a particular friend of my brother, " Sir Philip English."

"Do me the favour," said his Lordship, "to introduce me to him." She immediately complied, and Lord Kilberry, who had as much vanity as any gentleman in the room, and, of course, more than any lady who was present, now enjoyed the satisfaction of again becoming an object of attention; for every one who saw him in conversation with Mr. Burrows was immediately struck by the force of the contrast between them; which was so remarkable, that they seemed to form the opposite extremities of the same class of animals.

Lord Kilberry applauded Miss English and her dancing, with so much warmth, that if the same expressions had proceeded from the lips of any other man in the room, Burrows might have felt, or pretended to have felt, a little jealous: he,

however, concurred in his lordship's panegyric, with great good-humour, and said, that if he had arrived earlier in the evening, he should have entertained hopes of dancing with her himself; and, that he was still inclined to plead the privilege of long acquaintance, for again soliciting that enviable distinction.

"By all means," said my Lord, who, though the vainest coxcomb in town, was by no means ill-humoured, and could, if he chose it, behave like a well-bred man: "by all means, Mr. Burrows:—
"priority of acquaintance, on such occa-
"sions, is superior to all forms."

However, his Lordship neither expected that Miss English would hazard the imputation of caprice, after having rejected so many offers at the commencement of the evening; nor after the declaration

which she had made, of being much fatigued, that she would suffer herself to be prevailed upon to dance any more.

In the encouragement which he had given to Burrows to repeat his solicitations, Lord Kilberry had therefore in view, the gratification of his predominant passion, vanity, in seeing so handsome a man refused; where he himself had been before accepted; and with the greatest apparent alacrity.

But he was disappointed ; and Miss Arabella no longer refusing her consent, stood up with Mr. Burrows, and danced two dances with considerable spirit.

Lord Kilberry was not a little mortified by this proof of what he considered coquetry, and it was with indications of growing vexation; that he heard Mrs. Senac loudly applauding the grace and elegance of Miss English's partner.

Fortunate was it for Mrs. Senac, that her sex protected her from the effects of his Lordship's resentment: — her own ideas of self-importance were fully sufficient to guard her from the consequences of his neglect. When his Lordship withdrew to the opposite side of the room, the old lady began to make a comparison between his performance and that of Mr. Burrows, which entertained the company around her, almost as much as he had done by the previous exhibition with which he had indulged them.

By this evening's performance, Mr. Burrows had danced himself into the good graces of Mrs. Senac, almost as completely,—indeed, perhaps, more so, than he had done with regard to Miss Arabella English, at their first meeting, in the Isle of Wight.

Mrs. Senac gave him her card, and with the freedom, which her years and condition entitled her to use without impropriety, informed him that Miss English was her guest; and that her doors were always open to the acquaintance of her cousin, Sir Philip English.

In the course of the evening, Burrows informed Miss Arabella, that by the death of a relation, on whose account he had been compelled to quit the island so abruptly, he had become entitled to a fortune of more than twenty thousand pounds, and that he only waited for the expiration of what is called the dead year, to obtain possession of it, when it was his intention to have laid it at her feet; hoping, however, that he might have concealed from her the knowledge that his condition in life

had ever been such as to expose him to the possible contempt of her family.

"Of your understanding and endow-"ments, Madam," he added, "I always "entertained so exalted an opinion, that "I flattered myself the consideration, "which, with others, might have been "an insuperable barrier, would have been, "so far as yourself only were concerned, "of little importance in determining your "choice."

"I have too much of my brother's "frankness," replied Miss English, — "(which perhaps is originally my own, "rather than his) to dissemble my opi-"nion of you: and the concealment, "which I can readily forgive, is the only "circumstance that I have ever observed "in your behaviour which could make "me hesitate. As it is the only instance,

"however, in which you have required "forgiveness, there is no uncommon exer- "tion of candour requisite, to make me "overlook it: but I can appeal to Mrs. "Senac, if you required any additional "proof besides that which I have already "given you, that as we are seldom the "manufacturers of our own destiny;—no "consideration like that which you have "alluded to, has ever had a place in the "mind of Arabella English."

The politeness of Mr. Burrows extended to the whole of Mrs. Senac's party, and having, at her request, ordered her coachman to draw up, he insisted on conducting the ladies separately to the carriage, lest any disaster should occur: however, observing Lord Kilberry disengaged, at the time they were about to leave the room, he stepped up to his lordship,

and having had the honour of being introduced to him, on coming into the room, politely wished his Lordship a good night.

Lord Kilberry, aroused from a reverie into which he had fallen, opposite one of the largest pier-glasses, in which he seemed to have been contemplating some object, particularly interesting, forced a smile into his countenance, as he shook hands with Mr. Burrows, and then, as if recollecting himself: " But, my good Sir, " where are the ladies?"

" Just on the eve of their departure; " will your Lordship condescend to speak " to them before they go?" said Burrows, at the same time making way for the noble Lord, who required for his movements a greater space than might have been supposed from the diminutive size of his person, in consequence of the swing of

his arms, and the rotation of his hip-joints. —He conducted him to Mrs. Senac, to whom his Lordship made one of his best bows: and the young ladies having been previously attended to the carriage by Mr. Burrows, who, on his return, attached himself to Miss English; Lord Kilberry could do no less than offer to escort Mrs. Senac.

The company were again favoured with a very ludicrous scene:—the old lady in her marigold-coloured sattin, and glittering with jewels, marched down the ball-room by the side of her gallant Lord, who, in consequence of her enormous hoop, was barely able, by the utmost extension of his arm, to reach the tip of her finger with his right hand, whilst the left was swinging round and round in a manner impossible to be described, but

well fitted to display the diamond button and loop, and ostrich-feathers that adorned a cocked hat, of uncommon magnitude, which he was prevented carrying under his arm by the hilt of his sword which always occupied that place.

Every eye was upon the Patagonian and the dwarf, for such appeared Mrs. Senac and Lord Kilberry; nor did the famous Jeffrey Hudson ever create more merriment, in the merry court of that merry monarch, King Charles, than this pretty pair of portraits, at the mansion of my good Lord Mayor.

When Mrs. Senac and her company were safely seated in their coach, "well, "my dear," said the old lady, "I admire "your choice, and I vow that if I were "a young woman myself, there was not "a man in the room whom I would have

" sooner taken for my partner ;—and I " used to be very fond of dancing. I " remember my brother Sir Crisp, when " he was Lord Mayor, and I presided in " that very room, which I have just left, " said to the Duke of Newcastle, " Pris- " " cilla is no disgrace to the first ball- " " room of the first city in the world, " " my Lord Duke :"—And his Grace " replied: " My Lord, I never saw a bet- " " ter dancer than my Lady Mayoress, " " at St. James's ;—no, nor even at the " " court of the King of France." "

Miss English balancing in her own mind the consequences of an unsuccessful effort to conceal the station of her lover, determined to guard herself from the worst which could possibly happen: that, is the unseasonable impertinence of those who might make a subsequent discovery, by

stating to her cousin the circumstance which had taken place the day before: and, accordingly, when they were alone together, she mentioned to Mrs. Senac, the particulars relative to his coming to her house, with which the reader has been already made acquainted.

Whatever inclination Mrs. Senac might have felt to turn up her nose, or to look glum, at the introduction of the title of shoemaker, it was so quickly followed by the appurtenances of a fortune of more than twenty thousand pounds in bank stock, that, with great composure, the old lady remarked, "they who would re-
"fuse such a handsome man, with twenty
"thousand pounds, because he is a shoe-
"maker, ought to go without shoes all
"their lifetime."

"My dear Madam," said Arabella,

"I admire the sentiment; but the ex-
"pression is too much like that of my
"brother—"

"What signifies expressions?" interrupted Mrs. Senac: "where one person "knows what another means, words are "of very little consequence. I suppose "you would not be able to get through "the marriage ceremony if there were "any thing like a pun in it.——I assure "you, I shall not affront Mr. Burrows, by "talking to him about shoes, when he "comes here; and if I did, he might "retort it upon me, by saying, that he "was supplied with Turkey leather from "my warehouse. Nothing, in my opinion, "is half so ridiculous, as the affectation "which springs from such narrow-minded "pride.

"All pride, my dear madam, is nar-"row-minded," said Miss English.

"I was going to give you an instance "of it," continued Mrs. Senac:—"there "is Mr. Rodd, a professional gentleman "of my acquaintance, who never mentions "the name of his colleague, a person "of much greater abilities than himself, "without insinuating the superiority of "his own family;—and, you must know, "that the right on which he founds his "preeminence, is, forsooth, because he "was the son of a linen-draper, whilst "his rival was only the son of a tailor! "So much for upstarts!"

Mr. Burrows was an early visitor at Mrs. Senac's, where he was received with as much attention as if he had been a person of the highest condition; indeed, his manner and behaviour entitled him, at least, to equal regard.

Miss Arabella informed her brother,

by letter, of her intention to alter her condition; thinking it incumbent upon her to communicate the circumstance to him, although she would not condescend to ask his advice on the subject.

The Baronet, who entertained a good opinion of Burrows, replied to his sister, that as she was old enough to choose for herself, he should not attempt to advise, or interfere with her scheme, that Mr. Burrows should always find in him the affection of a brother, joined to the sincerity of a friend; and that he wished them much happiness together.

Miss Arabella was so well pleased with the Baronet's letter, and particularly as he did not assume the liberty of expressing any opinion on the subject; but left it entirely to her own prudence, that, in return, she sent him a pair of Brussels-

lace ruffles, against the ensuing assizes, when he was to appear in the character of high sheriff of the county in which he resided; accompanied with a more complimentary letter than she had ever written to him in her life.

She took care to avoid entering into any unnecessary particulars, as she called them; and therefore said not one word about Burrows's fortune, either in possession or expectancy; because, as she emphatically remarked, she never intermeddled in the affairs relative to his estate, and a brother had nothing to do with his sister's pin-money.

In a few weeks they were married; and, on their return from church, Mr. Burrows presented his bride with a settlement by which she was entitled, in case of his death, to the whole of his property.

It seemed at that time, an object of no importance, besides affording a convincing proof of his disinterested regard:—but in less than five weeks from their wedding day, whilst a very pretty villa near Twickenham was preparing for their reception, Burrows was seized with a violent fever, which notwithstanding the advice of the most eminent of the faculty put a period to his existence in a few days.

Mrs. Burrows was inconsolable for his loss, and it had the effect of destroying the gaiety of her temper, so completely, that, although she survived him many years, she was scarcely ever observed to be, what is usually termed, in good spirits, afterwards.

Sir Philip was much affected, on receiving intelligence of this melancholy event, and immediately hastened to Lon-

don; for he had a sincere regard for his sister, and heartily participated in her grief.

He immediately proposed that she should leave town, and accompany him to Blackwood Hall, which he desired her to consider as her home, and, with so much earnestness, entreated her to resume the management of his domestic concerns, that she consented to it; and returned with her sisters and the Baronet into the country.

From this period she might be considered as the head of the family at Blackwood Hall, which, in the event, proved to her, not only a comfortable, but a necessary asylum: for the relatives of Mr. Burrows, disappointed in their hopes of becoming possessed of the property of their old aunt, who had distinguished him

by the generous legacy before mentioned, but cut off by the settlement which Burrows had made at his marriage, of all future hopes of participating in the fortune which they had greedily set their minds upon; filed a bill in Chancery against the widow and executrix, which, by the procrastination of the attorney, and the thousand shifts and subterfuges practiced under the sanction of the laws, was protracted to an extent of more than thirty years, before she could touch a shilling of the money: so that, with a jointure of more than a thousand pounds a year, she would have been entirely dependant on her brother, if her own private fortune had not happily rescued her, from a state which would have been ill endured by a person of her high spirit.—She had resided at Blackwood Hall,

more than twenty years, a widow; and never once thought of changing her condition a second time. Her next sister was married to a respectable country gentleman, who was afterwards knighted: and Miss Margaret died unmarried, leaving to Jack English, the second son of her younger brother, all the fortune of which she had the disposal.

Of this hopeful youth, honourable mention will be made in the ensuing pages.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL THE TANJORE

CHAPTER V.

THE reader having now become a little acquainted with the company, with whom he is about to associate, will appreciate the value of their respective remarks; and the weight of their several opinions, with more facility and correctness than he could have done, if the information contained in the three last chapters had been withheld.

This preparatory account affixed to an historical narrative, is something like a master of the ceremonies at an assembly. Neither of them is absolutely necessary; but they both are very useful and convenient. The former does not increase

the value of the characters about to be depicted, but it prepares the mind for viewing them to greater advantage: the latter neither improves the dress nor increases the elegance of those whom he takes by the hand; but he brings them forward in proper order, arranges them in their right places, and presents them to view in the most favourable light; and enables them to make their bows and courtesies, and display the ornaments of their dress, and the elegance of their shapes in the most attractive manner.

The reader, therefore, it is hoped, will not think his time has been wholly mis-spent in reading the preliminary history of Sir Philip English and his sister, by way of introduction to the account which follows, of various scenes in which they were engaged.

The next morning after Sir Philip had expressed his desire to become acquainted with Mr. Worth, the clergyman whom his sister had mentioned in such favourable terms, the Baronet received an invitation to dine at Boneham Lodge on the Monday following, with Colonel Courtly, father of the young lady who had furnished Mrs. Burrows with the intelligence that Mr. Worth resided in their neighbourhood.

Sir Philip had therefore an additional motive besides that of ordinary politeness, for accepting the invitation; arising from his hopes of meeting with the clergyman.

On his arrival at the lodge, he found a large company already assembled, which was still receiving numerous additions, until at last Sir Philip numbered twenty-

six visitors, besides the Colonel's own family.

The state of Mrs. Burrows's health precluded her from being a regular visitor, and prevented her accompanying her brother; but, with this solitary exception almost every person of condition and opulence in the immediate vicinity, was, on this occasion, a guest of Colonel Courtly.

Sir Philip was well acquainted with the greater part of the company, but was a little disappointed that among those who were strangers, and to whom he was then, for the first time, introduced, he did not hear the name of Mr. Worth.

He took occasion, however, when he paid his compliments to Miss Courtly, to mention the observation which his sister had made respecting the novel: and she in return told him that Mr. Worth had

lately been presented to a small living in the neighbourhood, and was to have dined at Boneham Lodge that day. Her father happening to come up at the time, "Pray, "Sir," said she, "does not Mr. Worth "dine here to day?"

"I invited him, replied the Colonel, "but, by the bye I do not know how it "is, Sir Philip, these parsons are never "in time."

"That is contrary to the old rule, Co-"lonel," said the Baronet.

Courtly looked at his watch; and perceiving that all the company, excepting Mr. Worth, were already assembled, "This here thing," said the Colonel, "is monstrous provoking! So many no-"ble lords and beautiful young ladies, "and worthy knights. and baronets, all

"kept waiting by one parson. Umph!
"I have a great mind to wait no longer."

"I hope he has not met with any accident," said an elderly lady, who had not long come into the room; "but, the roads are very indifferent, and my carriage was nearly overturned:—does the gentleman live far off, Colonel?"

"No, my good Lady Withering," replied Courtly, "only just two miles from this very room." Then again taking out his watch, the Colonel resumed his complaint.

"My dear Lord Marquis, I am ashamed to keep your Lordship so long waiting, on account of this here Vicar: by Gad, my Lud, he shall wait long enough, for another invitation; Umph! The dinner has been ready twenty-two

" minutes by my watch. Confound all " parsons, I say."

At this instant Sir Peter Fountains, a very rich baronet, and who was also a dignitary of the church, presented himself to the eye and recollection of Courtly; who perceived that the latter part of his speech had not escaped him.

" Most excellent Sir Peter," said the Colonel, " is it possible for your great " goodness to forgive this freedom of " speech, in your poor commoner; which, " perhaps, nothing but absolute hunger " could have occasioned.

Sir Peter smiled: " Is it much past the " hour, Colonel?"

" Twenty-eight minutes, Sir Peter! " Eight and twenty minutes, upon my " word." Then looking out at the window, and not perceiving any one coming,

he rang the bell, and ordered dinner to be placed on the table: observing, "this "is past all endurance; I will not wait "one moment longer."

Presently resuming his station at the window, he descried Mr. Worth walking as fast as he could towards the Lodge. "Here comes the parson at last, ruminat-"ing upon excuses all the way. Umph!"

When he came near the window Worth pulled off his hat, and bowing to Colonel Courtly, said, "I am extremely afraid "that I may have kept you waiting, Co-"lonel."

"Not at all, Reverend Sir," replied the Colonel, without the least hesitation, "quite in good time; rather before the "time than after."

On entering the room, the parson again apologized.

"Not one word, my dear Sir!" exclaimed the Colonel, "I dares to say,' "the dinner is scarcely ready!"

Mr. Worth was a respectable looking, middle-aged clergyman, with a sensible and good-humoured countenance, which at once announced that all was right within; and promised pleasantry and information to those who conversed with him.

Miss Courtly introduced him to Sir Philip English; observing, at the same time, "this is the brother of Mrs. Burrows, whom you must remember having "seen at Brighton."

Mr. Worth immediately inquired after that lady, and this naturally brought on a conversation between the Baronet and himself, who were mutually pleased with each other: the former, on account of the good sense and vivacity of Worth, and

the latter, because he remarked the strongest traits of a benevolent heart, and an upright mind, amidst the roughness, independence, and oddities of Sir Philip.

The company, after some ceremony, having taken their places at the dinner-table, were feasted with a profusion of delicacies; Courtly making apologies all the time for the indifference of the cookery, and the deficiency of the entertainment; and reiterating his fears that nobody would be able to make a dinner.

The guests, however, did ample justice to the entertainment and themselves; and paid less attention to the Colonel's remarks than to the venison and ragouts, which stood before them. A second course of equal magnificence succeeded, and afterwards an elegant dessert.

Among the company, was a certain

Countess, distinguished in the fashionable circles, equally by her gaiety, good-humour, and taste; and not less remarkable for the "rosy health" which, amidst the dissipation of a town-life, and the continual bustle of routes, balls, concerts, and masquerades, still glows on her cheecks, and rivals the characteristic bloom of youth, far from the contamination of London smoke.

In a momentary interruption of that sort of conversation which usually fills up the dinner-time in large parties; Courtly, who knew, perhaps, as well as any man, how to improve such intervals,—addressed the Countess: "Well, my angelic Lady "B——, it rejoices me, beyond expres-"sion, to see you in this here humble "dwelling. How kind it is that you have "condescended to make one amongst us.

"I declare that the country has appeared "a thousand times more beautiful since "your ladyship's arrival. The flowers "smell sweeter, the lawn looks more "verdant, and, in short, wherever you set "your foot, all nature is renovated by "your presence!"

"Upon my word, Colonel," replied the Countess, "I shall think myself in "Arcadia presently, in the character of "Flora, and, when I return to town, "shall, perhaps, describe you, among the "Sylvan deities, my admirers, under the "denomination of Pan."

Courtly observed some of the company smile,—they were too well bred to laugh; —and he assumed a more serious air. "But to drop all metaphor, is your lady-"ship perfectly recovered from your late "indisposition?"

"Nay, Colonel," replied the Countess, "you might have called it *illness*;—for "you know that I was at death's door." Lady Withering and others who saw nothing in her ladyship's countenance but the bloom of health, looked a little surprised.—The Countess proceeded: "a "whole fortnight I kept my bed."

"A whole fortnight!" repeated the Colonel, with the most serious air, "and "in real danger during the whole of that "period."

"Certainly I was," replied her ladyship, "Rider, the apothecary, absolutely declin- "ed having any thing to do with the case, "unless I agreed to call in Dr. Millbrook."

"Pray what was your ladyship's dis- "order?" said Sir Philip English, with his usual bluntness.

"The Doctor said that it was a com- "plaint of a peripneumonic nature," re-

plied the Countess, " and if he had not " been called in, at that critical moment; " if the disorder had been neglected for " a single hour longer, it might have ter- " minated fatally:—indeed, to be sure " it was the most shocking cold, that any " body ever suffered. Colonel Courtly " knows that I never left my room, as I " said before, for a whole fortnight: that " is, excepting just to go to the play and " to church.

" Indeed, I was excessively concerned " to hear of it," said Courtly, " and " humbly beg pardon for having renewed " so disagreeable a subject. But, by-the- " bye, my dear lady, do you think that " the air of Grosvenor Place agrees with " you? It is too cold for some consti- " tutions."

" O dear, no! by no means cold, Co-

"lonel, perfectly sheltered from the north "wind; and the *boudoir* and principal "drawing-room, if any thing, rather too "much exposed to the sun."

"Indeed," said the Colonel, "that is "the very remark which Sir Harry "Dinglefield made, when he gave up his "house and removed to Park-lane, to "avoid the sun and the dust. To be "sure your Ladyship's is a charming "house, and it is fitted up with such "exquisite taste, that it unites all the "advantages of the country with the con-"venience of the town, But I must pay "no more compliments, for fear of being "metamorphosed into that sylvan deity "with the ugly name. Umph!"

When the ladies were withdrawn, the bottle circulated with freedom and hilarity, for Courtly was good-humoured and hos-

pitable, and might have filled a very honourable place in the opinion of his acquaintances, if the vanity of perpetually complimenting every one with whom he conversed, had not given an air of insincerity to his manners, which always excited distrust, and degraded him in the eyes of those who liked his drollery, and that humourous dryness, which, whilst it excites mirth in others, maintains an appearance of inflexible gravity.

He was rich, and not destitute of generosity; but, as no man was sure that he might not be the next object of his sarcastic reflection when absent, there were few who could look upon Colonel Courtly with a desire that their acquaintance with him should ripen into intimacy, and perhaps none who thought him posses-

sed of sufficient sincerity to be capable of forming a real friendship.

Mr. Worth, who had for a long time remained silent, being almost an entire stranger to the principal part of the company, and too modest to obtrude himself upon their notice, having, by the removal of the ladies, become the occupier of a seat next to Sir Philip English, the Baronet availed himself of the opportunity thus afforded him, to make some inquiry on the subject to which Mrs. Burrows had lately directed his attention. There was a kind of docility about Sir Philip, which whilst he was disposed to argue with his sister, and combat her opinions, nevertheless inclined him to attend to, and often to adopt, her advice or suggestions, even on the very subject on which they might have been most directly at variance.

"Mr. Worth," said the Baronet, "my
"sister has done you the justice to
"mention with the respect it deserves,
"the trouble which you took to defend
"the author of a book from which she
"had derived great satisfaction when at
"Brighton, last year; and I am very
"happy in the pleasure of meeting you
"to-day. I live at Blackwood Hall, and
"if it is not too far from your parsonage,
"I hope you will favour me with your
"company sometimes."

Worth made a suitable reply, and in the course of their conversation told Sir Philip, that he was personally acquainted with the author of the novel alluded to, but was not at liberty to disclose his name.

"It is unnecessary," said the Baronet,
"after your conversation with my sister,
"to ask if it be worth reading.—You

"must be told, Mr. Worth, that it was "by accident that I heard of it; as I "never trouble myself about such things, "and, indeed, am no great reader. My "sister and I happened to get into a dis-"pute about *Modern Times*, and what I "applied to the government and the mi-"nistry, she supposed was a criticism "upon your friend the author. However, "after a mutual explanation, we cleared "up the mistake; and Mrs. Burrows "said so much about the book, and "about you, that I have ever since been "very desirous of seeing both."

Worth was explaining to Sir Philip the nature and design of the publication, when the title of *Modern Times* caught the ear of Courtly.

"By-the-bye, Sir Philip," said the Colonel, "that there novel which I per-

" ceive you are talking of, is the vastest
" favourite you can imagine, among all the
" ladies in the world. There is that old
" Countess of Arcadia, who has just left
" the room,—I dares to say, she never
" slept a wink till she had read it twice
" or three times over, the first day it came
" out."

" Have you read it Colonel?" said Sir Philip.

" By Gad, I have. For my daughter
" Maria told me that my portrait was in
" the exhibition, and of course I could do
" no less than take a look at it: Umph!"

" Is it a good likeness, Colonel?" said Sir Peter Fountains.

" Not a very handsome one, Sir Peter;
" some bold touches, to be sure. Umph!
" A little aggravation of features, but

"by-the-bye not quite sufficient to make "me resemble Pan! Umph! Sir Peter!"

"Is it professedly a satirical performance?" said Sir Peter Fountains.

"No, Sir Peter," replied Mr. Worth, "it is a novel; but in the course of the "narrative, a number of living characters "are introduced, and several anecdotes "related, which serve as a key to the per-"formance; and enable almost ever one "to discover the likeness of his neighbour, "although he may not always be able to "see himself. I do not think that there "is any thing ill-natured in it; the author "seems rather to indulge himself in "laughing at the ill-humour of others: "nor is there any thing of a scandalous "tendency, I think. Is there, Colonel "Courtly?"

"O no, Sir," replied the Colonel, "by "no means, nothing of the kind: severe "enough, but by-the-bye, the Vicar "of Dunsmore diverts me excessively. "Umph!"

"Who is meant by the Vicar of Dunsmore?" said Sir Philip.

"I have not a guess," replied the Colonel, "but of course he is a parson, and "the author makes him excuse himself "from belonging to a book club, by saying, that he never reads any book whatsoever!"

"I think," said Mr. Worth, "that "he is rather hard upon the Earl of "Avonside; if, as is commonly supposed he is meant by Lord Stiffneck."

"Upon my honour, he is indeed," added the Colonel, "there he is too bad in-

"deed: that part is damnably severe by "Gad!"

"But does he not speak well of any "one?" inquired Sir Peter Fountains.

"Yes," said Mr. Worth, "he praises "some of the characters, with great "warmth, and even allows the weight of "their merit, if they have any, to the "most objectionable among them, even "to Lord Stiffneck himself."

"You might well say, *if they have* "*any*," said Sir Philip English, "when "applying your remark to Lord Avonside. "Perhaps you may be acquainted with "him, Colonel Courtly; but from what "I have had the misfortune to see and "hear of his Lordship, if any thing "*good* is said of him, it must be sup-"plied from the stores of imagination, "rather than of memory."

"Exactly so," said the Colonel, with an assenting smile: "by-the-bye, there is "not a character more exactly drawn in "the whole book; but my Lud looks "very shy about it. Umph! Very shy, "indeed, Sir Peter."

"He finds," replied Sir Peter, "that "the cap fits him, I suppose, but per-"haps is not very becoming."

"Excellent indeed, Sir Peter! admi-"rable! Umph! *He feels that the cap* "*fits him, but is not very becoming.* "But Sir Peter, it does not disguise his "features. Umph!"

"Well, my Lord Marquis," continued Courtly, addressing himself to a nobleman who had not spoken a word since dinner,—"this here novel makes us all "very merry, does it not? Umph! By-"the-bye, pray did your Lordship ever

" discover the author of that there epi-
" gram, which a certain nobleman exhi-
" bited to us last winter?"

" To be sure I did," replied the Marquis. " I knew that my librarian could " tell who wrote it. It was Garrick him- " self."

" Indeed! my Lud! It is incomparably " well expressed; but I dares to say his " Lordship was not a little sore about it."

" Very angry indeed, at the time;" said the Marquis, " notwithstanding he affect- " ed to carry it off with a laugh:—but it " is grown old now, and is almost forgot- " ten."

Sir Philip English inquired what were the lines? And the Marquis explained that they were written by Garrick, in consequence of his having gone to a nobleman's house, who had frequently invited

him to take a dinner *en famille*: but when himself and his friend had been shewn the curiosities of the place, instead of a dinner—the nobleman made them a present of a book, gave them a dish of chocolate, and dismissed them. The verses were printed in some of the periodical publications of the day; but, as Sir Philip had never seen them, the Marquis obligingly gave him a copy:—

"Some strollers invited by W——k's kind Earl,
"To his castle magnificent came,
"Prepar'd to admire both the owner and seat,
"And to give them due honour and fame.

"His chambers, his cellars, his kitchen they prais'd,
"But alas! they soon found to their cost,
"That if they expected to feast at his house,
"They reckon'd without their great host.

"He shew'd them Guy's pot, but he gave them no
"soup,
"No meat would his Lordship allow,
"Unless they had gnaw'd the blade bone of the boar,
"Or the rib of the famous dun cow.

" " But since you're my friends,"" said the complaisant peer,
" " I'll give you a new printed book,
" " Which may to your minds some amusement afford :
" " 'Tis the History of Greville and Brooke.""

" " And since you're so civil, well-bred and polite,
" " Pray pardon one curse from a sinner,
" " For our breakfast we thank you, my very good Lord,
" " But a plague on your family dinner.""

" They are severe enough, to be sure," said Sir Philip, " but Colonel, if you or I, " or any of this good company, should " make such a pretence about hospitality, " without any right to it; do you not " think we should deserve to be lashed in " a similar manner ?"

" Most worthy Sir Philip, I exactly " agree with you ; but Sir Peter, although " the cap might fit, it, perhaps, would " not seem very becoming ! Umph!"

The company had been repeatedly sum-

moned to attend the ladies in the drawing-room, and before they adjourned, Sir Philip invited Mr. Worth to dine with him on the Thursday following: and "I wish," added the Baronet, "that you could bring "under your arm the author of whom "we have been speaking."

Mr. Worth readily accepted the hospitable and unceremonious invitation, and this preliminary being arranged, they joined the company, and proceeded to the drawing-room.

"By-the-bye," said Colenel Courtly; "I will have a little diversion with the "Countess about this here novel."

The card tables were ready, and the gentlemen having taken their coffee, were preparing to cut for partners, when Courtly advancing towards the Countess, with his usual gravity. "O my charming

" Lady B.——, I quite forgot to ask if " your Ladyship has seen the new novel " called *Modern Times.*

" I have, Colonel," replied the Countess: " and pray give me leave to ask, " whether there is any truth in the report " that you furnished the author with " some of the anecdotes?"

" Nay! my good Lady! Now you " are too hard upon me! By the-bye, " they say that I am introduced in the " course of the work. Umph!"

" To be sure you are," said the Countess: " it would have been very impolitic " to have omitted yourself, among so ma- " ny of your acquaintances and associates: " that would have led to immediate sus- " picion, if not certain detection, you " know, but how came the author to be " discovered?"

"Fye, fye! charming Goddess of Ar-"cadia! I know nothing of the author: "but, seriously, does any one pretend to "think that I had a hand in it? Umph!"

"Why not, Colonel? It would not "disgrace even a man of your wit; and "thereare so many droll stories told with "so much gravity, and so well introduc-"ed, that it must be attributed to you or "the late Archbishop of Canterbury. I "vow I will give publicity to the report. "It will make an excellent prologue at "Brandenburgh-House, at the next per-"formance there!"

"You see," said the Colonel turning to Sir Peter Fountains: "She is a little "like my Lord W——, she tries to turn "it off with a laugh."

"So should every one," said the reverend Baronet. "It was a great misfortune

"to Warburton, that with all his wit and "learning, he could not bear to be laugh-"ed at; and instead of laughing in turn, "a jest was always too acrid to sit easily "on his stomach. Instead of brushing "off the dust, which was thrown upon "him in sport, he used to stamp and fume "until what was at first a mere trifle, had "become almost enough to smother him. "Nothing repels satire so effectually, as "good-humour."

Colonel Courtly perceiving that Sir Philip English appeared to be much pleased with the conversation of Mr. Worth, came up to them, and intreated that they would remain at Boneham-Lodge, and dine with him the next day, adding that he expected a large party, and had no doubt that the absence of those, who were about to leave the Lodge that evening,

would be supplied at least in point of numbers, by others who had been already invited for the next day.

"It will be a treat for you Sir Philip, to "see the great general, who has positive-"ly promised to be of the party."

"General Shetland, I presume, Sir," said Mr. Worth.

"The same, reverend Sir, at your ser-"vice," replied the Colonel; "but, by-"the-bye, Sir Philip, much better named "Agamemnon; and almost as well known "by that appellation. They who are "amused by contrasts may meet with "some entertainment to-morrow," continued the Colonel;—"for there will be "Agamemnon, who is as big as Goliath, "or as poor dear Phil. Hayes of Oxford, "and Count Borolawsky the celebrated "dwarf, whom, by-the-bye, I happened

" to see passing in a boat, by my lawn:
" and as I always like to imitate my good
" neighbour Sir Philip, who often picks
" up very excellent company by the side
" of the road; I sent and invited the
" Count to dine with me."

Mr. Worth smiled at this trait in the character of his new acquaintance, Sir Philip English; and the Colonel explained:—" It is as true as the Gospel, is it
" not Sir Philip? You can not imagine
" Mr. Worth, how much amusement the
" Baronet often creates by incidental in-
" vitations.——Sir Philip sees a couple
" of naval officers, half choked with dust,
" on a broiling summer's day, mounted
" on Portsmouth hacks, perhaps, scarce-
" ly able to get along, with all the whip-
" ping and spurring in their riders' power.
" —Out goes Sir Philip, cap in hand;

" " Gentlemen your humble servant!
" " Your most obedient humble servant.
" " I am excessively sorry to see you so
" " indifferently mounted. Will you al-
" " low me to offer you some refreshment,
" " this hot weather?"

" The strangers see a portly gentleman;
" and a noble Mansion-House. " Faith!
" " Captain," says one to the other, " we
" " are in luck here." They bow to the
" Baronet; and by-the-bye, it is ten to
" one that they accept his invitation im-
" mediately. Umph! Sir Philip! If not
" he is sure to repeat it, with all the ur-
" banity in the world. " Pray, Gentle-
" " men, do me the honour:—dinner is
" " just coming in,—you shall be as wel-
" " come as the flowers in May!" Umph!
" The sailors dismount, and when they
" have once got into the house, Sir Philip

"always feeds his guests with Lotos; and "they forget their horses, their voyage, "and, in short, every thing in the world, "but—— his generous hospitality!"

"A truce to compliments, Colonel," said the Baronet;—"you were going to "tell us of some other contrast, besides "that of the giant and the dwarf."

"I ask pardon for the digression, good "Sir Philip; and to resume my narrative, "—or as the gentlemen of the gown, Mr. "Worth, sometimes say, to proceed with "my discourse:—there will also be my "Lady Mottesford, who never utters more "than six words at a time; nor, unless "hard pressed, so many syllables: and "Miss Hannah Savannah, the West-In-"dian, whose tongue never lies still a "moment."

"Is it possible, Colonel," said Sir

Philip, "that amongst all the unaccount-
"able names in the world, there can be
"such an one as that you have mention-
"ed?"

"As sure, most worthy Baronet, as
"your name is Philip English, so is Han-
"nah Savannah the real name of one of
"my expected guests."

"I should not have inquired so parti-
"cularly," added Sir Philip, "but I have
"not forgotten *Blobbs!*" The Colonel
laughed. "You must know, Mr. Worth,"
said the Baronet, "that my neighbour,
"Courtly, happened to mention the cant
"name of one of our acquaintances to a
"gentleman in the navy; and on his
"meeting with him afterwards, the officer
"inadvertently addressed him by the
"name of Mr. Blobbs, instead of his own,
"to the great confusion of both parties,

"and the diversion of the company pre-"sent. I thought it might be right to "satisfy myself respecting Miss Savannah, "lest I should make a similar blunder."

Sir Philip English accepted the invitation of Colonel Courtly for the next day, observing, that he thought himself *quite in luck*, as the Colonel said about the naval Captains, and had tasted the Lotos.

Courtly bowed: "A thousand thanks, "Sir Philip!—Good Mr. Worth, I "hope you will not leave us."

Mr. Worth also accepted the invitation. The greater number of their guests now took their leave, or glided down stairs unobserved; but the Colonel happening to see the Marquis and Sir Peter Fountains, at the instant they were about to withdraw, followed them with a profusion of compliments to the very steps of their

carriages, and after repeating his thanks for the great honour they had conferred upon him, and professed himself their most obedient humble servant, at least forty times, re-ascended to the drawing-room, and then taking Sir Philip by the button:—" What a humdrum sort of a " Peer, that there Marquis is! Umph!" exclaimed the Colonel. " He is as bad " as a ghost; never speaks, unless he is " spoken to; and then wraps himself in " his shroud again, directly."

" That may be one of the privileges of " the peerage," replied Sir Philip, " but " I have been so much entertained by Mr. " Worth's agreeable conversation, and " your remarks, that I have given but " little attention to his Lordship."

Before the company separated for repose, the Colonel invited Sir Philip to

accompany him on the water, the next day, as he was going to pay a morning visit to a nabob, who had lately purchased Villa-Royal, a beautiful seat, a few miles from Boneham, on the opposite bank of the river which washed the foot of the lawn on which the lodge was situated.

Sir Philip consented; and soon afterwards retired to his chamber.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL. THE TANJORE

CHAPTER VI.

When the company assembled in the saloon to breakfast, Sir Philip was glad to observe, that the agreeable Countess was still of the party. She was an excellent match, in the vivacity of her repartees, for Colonel Courtly; and as she leads the ton in town, was no less the general delight of every one who had the pleasure of meeting with her in the shades of rural retirement.

"Will your Ladyship allow me," said Sir Philip, "without being offended at so "great a liberty, to inquire if you have "lately seen my hopeful nephew, Jack "English?"

"Sir Philip," replied her Ladyship, "I am half inclined to tell you a secret; "but do not be angry, for with all his "foibles, Captain English is certainly a "very agreeable fellow, though a little "too much of a rattle:—but I should not "be at all surprised to see him here, dur- "ing my stay."

"Here, Madam!" exclaimed the Baronet, "I thought he had been gone to "Scarborough!"

"To Brighton you mean, Sir Philip!"

"No; my Lady, to Scarborough!" The Countess appeared a little surprised. —"I can not be mistaken," continued the Baronet; "for, to tell your Ladyship a "secret, in return for that with which you "have entrusted me, Jack prevailed upon "me to lend him (as he calls it) five "hundred pounds, on pretext of the

" length of the journey, and the death of
" one of his horses, which he spoiled in
" riding a race, with some highwayman,
" I believe, on the Bath roads."

" Poor fellow," said the Countess, laughing:—" riding a race with a highwayman,
" Sir Philip, would have been bad enough,
" to be sure; but, to tell the truth,
" English has been hoaxed by his ac-
" quaintances ever since, because it was
" a still greater blunder. They say it
" was a race with a *foot-pad*; it was the
" famous pedestrian, Barclay; with whom
" the Captain made a match, for—I dare
" say you have heard how much, Sir
" Philip: that he would reach Bath first;
" riding with his face towards the horse's
" tail."

" D—n him for a fool!" exclaimed Sir Philip. " I beg your Ladyship's pardon,

" for my vulgarity; but, this is the first " intelligence I have had of the nature of " the bet, and it provokes me beyond " expression! Did you ever hear of such " a thing in your life, Colonel?"

" Oh dear! yes, Sir Philip; there was " a match made by Lord Budbrook, and " Sir Andrew Apeworth, the last spring, " for a thousand guineas play or pay, that " his Lordship rode a half starved hack- " ney-coach-horse, from Hyde Park Cor- " ner, through the city, and reached Black- " wall, before Sir Andrew, who was to " ride one of his hunters, with a pair of " his own boots on the animal's legs.

" The hunter travelled with so much " speed, that my Lord pushed the coach " horse beyond his strength, and he fell " down dead, not far from Billinsgate; " however, his Lordship adhering to the

" literal condition of the bet,—that he " who arrived first, was to be deemed the " winner, gave a couple of guineas to the " driver of a fish cart to take the dead " horse into his vehicle, which was done " in a moment, and my Lord seated on " the carcase, drove by Sir Andrew in " great triumph, and won his wager. " So much for racing, Sir Philip: and, by- " the-bye, this here Lord Budbrook is an " intimate acquaintance of Captain Eng- " lish, and he might borrow a hint for " his late match from the aforesaid Lord! " Umph! Sir Philip!"

" Umph! Indeed, Colonel," re-echoed Sir Philip, so much vexed about his nephew, that he was totally unconscious of this inadvertent mockery. " The devil " take Captain English, and all his ac-

" quaintances,—— excepting your La-
" dyship, I mean."

The Countess, Miss Courtly, and the rest of the company, could not help laughing; Courtly joined in the joke, and like Sir Philip, attributing their mirth to his incautious expression to the Countess, wholly overlooked the share which belonged to himself.

The Countess resumed her account of Captain English. " The Captain, you
" know, Sir Philip, lost his bet, and he
" immediately determined to take a trip
" to Brighton this season, to improve
" himself in the science of horsemanship,
" if it be correct to say so, by manœu-
" vring the Brighton ponies, vulgarly
" called asses, on the Steyne, and about
" Goldston Bottom: for he has almost

"pledged himself to renew the competi- "tion with *the foot-pad*, as soon as he re- "turns to town."

"Then I wish he may meet with the "same fate as the hackney-coach-horse."

"Nay, good Sir Philip," said the Countess, "I will not suffer you to be so "severe upon the poor fellow, for he is a "great favourite of mine, and I should "not be able to go through half the fa- "tigue of seeing so much company as I "do, every winter, if English did not "dissipate my perpetual lowness of spi- "rits, by his wit and vivacity. Indeed, "Colonel, he is a charming fellow! You "have often seen him, I presume!"

"A thousand times, most amiable "Countess, and with increasing pleasure: "he is certainly a most agreeable compa-

" nion, Sir Philip, if he could be restrain-
" ed within proper bounds. Umph!"
" " Yes, Colonel," replied Sir Philip:
" if within any bounds at all, but it is
" impossible. He is as wild as an Ouran
" Outang, and almost as mischievous. I
" dread the sight of him. He turns my
" house topsy turvy, displaces every
" thing, and creates as much confusion,
" as a troop of horse at free quarters.
" Then, he is perpetually plaguing me
" about politics, for the young dog has
" got all the Tory principles of a Groom
" of the Chamber; and here he meets
" with a powerful auxiliary in his aunt;
" so that, between them both, I have a
" fine time of it, and am generally com-
" pelled to purchase peace by a few hun-
" dreds in hard cash, to bribe him to eva-

" cuate the citadel, as I think you mili-
" tary gentlemen phrase it, Colonel!"

" Exactly so, Sir Philip, perfectly cor-
" rect! Admirably expressed indeed!—
" And so, Sir Philip, the Captain actually
" makes you *come down with the ready*,
" before he will retreat. Umph!"

" Yes, Colonel, he has done so, many
" times: but this riding Skimmington,
" this ass-racing, which the Countess has
" been so good to describe, shall save me
" at least enough to buy a new coach
" against the winter: and if Jack English
" does not mend his manners, he shall
" never set his foot in it.

" Alas! Mr. Worth, this is the histo-
" ry of *Modern Times*; I wish your
" friend, the author, were acquainted with
" my nephew, I'll warrant he would fur-
" nish him with exploits enough in six

"weeks to make incidents for as many "volumes."

The hour being arrived when the Colonel and Sir Philip were to set out for Villa-Royal, the conversation was broken off. As they were passing through the hall, Colonel Courtly's house-steward made his appearance, to ask his master if there were any particular directions respecting dinner. Here another of the Colonel's eccentricities was displayed; for notwithstanding the faults he had found with the provision, the day before,—he turned to Sir Philip and observed:—"What say you, Baronet? Umph! "It was a very good dinner yesterday, "was it not?"

"I thought it a very excellent one, and "said so," replied Sir Philip.

"Well then, Jean," to the servant, "there will be about the same number; "let us have exactly the same dinner "in every respect: and—harkee! be sure "not to forget the stewed carp! Umph! "Stewed carp, Sir Philip, is no bad dish; "Umph!"

They stepped into a fine vessel, which lay moored at the bottom of the lawn, and dropped down the river.

As they sailed along, innumerable striking and picturesque objects presented themselves on either side; but both Sir Philip and the Colonel were too much accustomed to them, to enjoy such delightful scenery with that zest which it affords to those who are not so frequently its visitors.

In the midst of a venerable grove of oaks, springing from a turf of the most

enchanting verdure, and varied by charming irregularities, the ruins of an abbey half overgrown with ivy, and "majestic in "the moss of time," was finely contrasted by the light and tasteful elegance of the seat they were about to visit, which was situated on the opposite bank of the river; and surrounded with a considerable extent of parterre, planted with exquisite judgment.

To those, before whose eyes these objects were continually present, they had become uninteresting; and the Baronet and his neighbour passed by them with much the same sort of common-place admiration, which the farmer feels, who daily rides through the most beautiful pasturage interspersed with groups of cattle, and a variety of objects, which the tasteful eye

of the artist or the connoisseur would have beheld with rapturous delight.

Sir Philip, therefore, regardless of the woods, the verdure, the river, or the ruin, seized the present opportunity of being alone with Colonel Courtly, to discuss the affairs of the nation; and began the conversation on this topic, by such remarks as usually suggest themselves to a country gentleman not altogether satisfied with what is going on above, and the less pleased, the more he understands about the matter. Enormous taxes, almost equally harrassing to those who are to pay them, and those whose office it is, to explain the unintelligible enactments by which they are distinguished in the Statute Book. Troublesome levies of the militia, and the vexatious example of two or three loan-jobbers and contractors, who occasionally exhibit-

ed their names at the head of a list of voluntary contributions in aid of what they called the government, but what Sir Philip English always denominated a corrupt administration. These, with no small pathos, did the Baronet enlarge upon, in hopes rather than in expectation, that Colonel Courtly might be induced to say something on such subjects, as he was a Member of Parliament; and of course, the Baronet supposed him to be better acquainted with the mechanism of the stupendous machine of state, than himself, who had never been admitted into the *sanctum sanctorum* of St. Stephen's.

I say *hoped* rather than *expected*; for although the Baronet had frequently agitated such subjects before, and had even taken opposite sides of the question at different times, in order to induce the

Colonel to debate a little with him (for it was almost indifferent to Sir Philip whether he agreed or disagreed on the subject under discussion, so that he would only bandy the ball of conversation on this favourite topic,)—it was always without success.

Courtly, who could be grave with the serious, and lively with the gay; who would declaim in the presence of princes and peers, harangue in the company of judges and lawyers, talk of dress, fashions, and furbelows with the ladies, of Shakespeare and Racine, with the sons and daughters of Thespis; and of Hippocrates and Sir Hans Sloane among physicians and men of *virtù*;—although he had been a senator during the greater part of his life, scarcely ever delivered a speech of more than half a dozen sentences, in

Parliament; and seemed to leave his politics with the Speaker's mace, whenever he quitted the House.

He listened, it is true, with the most polite attention, to Sir Philip, and applauded his remarks, in the same manner as he would have done Mr. Pitt or Mr. Wyndham, or any other distinguished orator.

" Excellent, Sir Philip! very excel-
" lently expressed, indeed! Incomparably
" well spoken! Umph!

" By-the-bye, Sir Philip, why do you
" not get into Parliament for that there
" borough?"—pointing to the spire of a certain sea-port, within sight. " By Gad,
" it might be worth your while. Umph!
" By-the-bye, I have some influence in
" the corporation, and you know that I
" would give you my support, with all

" the pleasure in life. Umph! Sir Phi-
" lip, do think of it a little."

" It would give me a great deal of trou-
" ble," replied the Baronet, " besides I
" hate living in London: or else, I do
" believe, that my principles would be
" agreeable to many of the burgesses; and
" they all know that I would not be bought
" by any set of men whether *ins* or *outs*.
" ——But, Colonel, what is your opinion
" of this hubbub about corruption and
" purchasing seats. For my own part
" I can scarcely believe it to be very com-
" mon. I do not perceive how it can
" answer."

" By Gad, Sir Philip," rejoined Court-
ly, " there is no knowing! These here
" times are very tricklish! Umph! By-
" the-bye, what do you say to the county,
" at the next election, Sir Philip?"

"It would be too much like running "the gauntlet, Colonel; to be sure my "stake in it is considerable, and I have "some popularity."

"By Gad you have, Sir Philip:—a "monstrous deal, indeed, Umph! "Here," "says a freeholder, "here do come Zir "Villip English, an honourable Ba- "ronet, with a matter of nine or ten "thousand pounds a year. His vather "and grandvather did live at Blackwood "Hall, before un. Dang it, neighbour, "he shall have my voat:—doant thee "goo to gee thine to Squire Vish Skin, "the oil marchant; nor to that damn'd "old tawny yellow, that be just come "from among the Black-a-moors, and "do want belike, to make zlaves of vree- "born Englishmen. I told un zo, I "told un zo, when he did call at my

" "varm. Noa! Noa! Zir Villip En-
" "glish vor I! Zir Villip vor ever!"—
" Umph! Sir Philip."

" You must be an excellent canvasser, " Colonel! If ever I do put up, I must " beg the favour of a few lessons."

" Welcome, my dear friend," said the Colonel, " as the flowers in May!"

They were now arrived at a flight of marble steps, leading to the gardens of Villa-Royal, and the landing of the visitors was announced, by the discharge of six brass swivels, placed on a small battery.

This was the first visit of Sir Philip and Courtly to the family; but the Colonel in his senatorial capacity, had enjoyed numerous and frequent opportunities of seeing Mr. Middleman on the trial of an East India Governor,—when he made a very conspicuous figure; and, by the help

of an excellent memory, rendered, it is said, no small assistance to the cause of truth and justice, in the acquittal of the person accused.

Mr. Middleman received his visitors with great politeness, and conducted them through a range of apartments, which vied in splendour, with the palace of a Turkish emperor; to a library, decorated in a style of such astonishing magnificence, that Sir Philip could scarcely find a resting place for his eyes; and even Colonel Courtly, who was more accustomed to the extravagances of modern fashion, in the splendid habitations about the metropolis and its environs, was at a loss for words to express his admiration of the glitter which surrounded him.

An attempt to describe this museum of Asiatic luxury would be useless; unless

by way of *furnishing hints* for a new edition of Mr. Hope's splendid work on sofas, girandoles, and candelabra, or supplying Christie, and his brethren of the baize, with fresh materials for the exercise of their fascinating eloquence.

Suffice it therefore to say, (adopting the phraseology of almost all panegyrists when they have exhausted their vocabulary of praises) that in the world's wide range could not be found more exquisite workmanship, more gorgeous magnificence than had concurred to render Villa-Royal worthy even of a more splendid title, if any such could have been found.

Nor were the works of art, the only objects of the admiration of visitors. Nature had also lent a hand to complete this elysium: besides the beauties of wood and water,—for the house commanded a most

interesting prospect, not only of the beautiful river and its sublime accompaniments before-mentioned, but of the sea itself, "decked with many a swelling sail."—She had peopled the delightful region with a numerous progeny of children; who although of different *casts*, from the Circassian bloom of "the fairest of the fair," through all the different shades of brown, to the tropical tawny, darkening even to the African's sublimest jet, were, with true British liberality, here associated and educated together without the smallest perceptible distinction or preference.

Sir Philip English could not very well reconcile what he saw with some of the old-fashioned notions which he had imperceptibly imbibed, and resolved on his return to Boneham to submit a case to the consideration of Mr. Worth, who

being a good scholar, he thought must necessarily be a great casuist.

However, as he could not help dropping a word or two of his design to the Colonel, after they had left Villa-Royal, Courtly opened the history of certain transactions among some of the first persons in the realm, by which Sir Philip began to understand, that what were once considered the fences of morality, with regard to conjugal affairs, have been of late years removed to a considerable distance from the ancient boundaries: not indeed, by act of parliament, but, it appears, by very general consent, particularly in the *upper circles* of the empire.

Having extended their visit to the period which politeness pointed out as proper on such an occasion, of which there could not be a better judge than Colonel Courtly, they were about to take

leave of Mr. Middleman, when on touching a spring with his foot, a very large looking-glass at the end of the library divided itself into a pair of folding doors, and opening, displayed, in an adjoining apartment, a most luxurious repast, of which they were invited to partake, with so much hospitality, that it was impossible to refuse: and Sir Philip, who had at first been a little embarrassed amidst such a profusion of finery, was so agreeably surprised by the unexpected ease and urbanity of the possessor, that he now felt himself almost at home, and, before his departure, heartily shook hands with the Nabob, and invited him to Blackwood-Hall.

Middleman poured out whole libations of compliments, and returned almost as many thanks to the Baronet and the Co-

lonel for the honour they had conferred upon him by this visit, as Courtly himself gave to the Nabob, for the elegant entertainment of which they had partaken ;—which, to use the Colonel's own expression, was, "by-the-bye, a monstrous handsome "*déjeuné*, in the very highest style of "oriental magnificence."

Nor was the Baronet much behind in his acknowledgments: in short, between the pleasure of the Nabob's conversation, the excellence of his *liqueurs*, and a large bumper of Burgundy which he recommended as a substitute for Madeira, and infinitely preferable in hot weather, they returned to Boneham-Lodge in very high spirits.

CHAPTER VII.

The company had already begun to assemble, when Colonel Courtly reurned to his own house. He was dressed in an instant; and had gone round the circle of his guests, before Sir Philip English rejoined him.

They were so agreeably employed in recounting the particulars of their morning visit to Villa-Royal, that if the Nabob had been only desirous of obtaining visitors, he could not have more effectually secured a succession of them, than by engaging two men, of manners so opposite as Sir Philip and the Colonel, to sound his praise.

Whatsoever might be thought of the sincerity of Courtly, no one who knew Sir Philip English would suspect him of paying an intentional compliment so as to misrepresent his real opinion of Middleman: and whatsoever might be thought of the Baronet's taste, there could be no doubt in the world, of the correctness of that of Colonel Courtly.

Between them both, the elegance and splendor of Villa-Royal was so emblazoned, that there were few among the company, who had not already paid their respects there, but made numerous apologies for the unavoidable omission, and resolved to atone for their neglect, the very first day not wholly occupied by previous engagements.

"Pray, Admiral," said Courtly, addressing himself to a rough-looking man

in a naval uniform considerably tarnished, "Do you happen to know this here Nabob?"

"Do I? yes, and be d—d to him!" replied Admiral Ortolan; "I was in the East-Indies long enough to know too much of him and his exploits, to wish to know any thing more of either."

"Prodigiously rich," added Courtly, "I suppose, Admiral! Umph! Very rich, is he not? Umph!"

Among the company at Boneham-Lodge, were Sir Nathan and Lady Caper. The former was a painter of considerable repute and ingenuity: but having (it is not pretended to say either through his art or artifice) intermarried with the widow of a country 'squire, he exchanged the pencil and mediocrity,—some, ill naturedly

said, indigence and a garret,—for, twenty thousand a year, and a coach and six.

With the advantage of such appendages, and a good wife, into the bargain, his respectability, if not his fame, would have been undoubtedly, at least, preserved, if the most ridiculous affectation had not induced him carefully to conceal from every one, from whom he could hide it, the knowledge of his once having been a painter.

This folly might have been more excusable, if Sir Nathan had not previously established his reputation, by the merit of his performances: but what can be said for the caprice of a man who is unexpectedly lifted out of his original *dust*, to sit with the princes and nobles of the land.

The very solicitude which the Baronet (for he was become a baronet too) never

failed to shew, whenever the conversation pointed at his former profession, to avoid being recognized as a painter, was the means of exciting a thousand times more ridicule, than he would have otherwise had to encounter. The servants are said to have been strictly forbidden ever to look at the paintings in the house when he was present; and restrained from the use of the words *light*, *shade*, and *colour*. But this regulation like the edict for obliterating the remembrance of the celebrated Ephesian incendiary, effectually defeated itself. So far did the mania extend, however, that it is credibly related of Sir Nathan, that a painter's brush, casually left on the floor of an unfinished room, had a similar influence upon the Baronet, as two straws laid across are said to have upon a witch.

It unfortunately happened that this trait in the character of Sir Nathan was wholly unknown to Sir Philip English, who was never deficient in personal civilities to any one, though he abominated the prostitution of praise.

Perhaps when he was sitting *tête-à-tête* with Mrs. Burrows, at Blackwood Hall, if he had occasion to mention the name of Sir Nathan Caper, he might sometimes add his newly acquired title of Baronet, with an emphasis different from that with which he would have pronounced the names of his old friends, Sir Richard Worsley and Sir John Barrington; but as he never indulged himself, in personal reflections, unless in the case of public men, whom he always thought fair game, so Sir Nathan might have been consigned to the vault of his ancestors, if he had

any, before Sir Philip English had made himself acquainted with the above mentioned piece of affectation, if Sir Nathan had not published it at Boneham, on the present occasion.

But Sir Philip happening to refer to his brother baronet on the subject of a painting in the dining-room which was opposite to them as they sate at table, the latter was so much disconcerted and out of humour, that after in vain endeavouring to shift the conversation, he was at length driven to what has been called, the last resource of fools,—an awkward silence.

Sir Philip English who was unconscious of having said any thing at which Caper could have taken umbrage, and perceiving him shuffle about in his chair, adjust his cravat, and expand his nostrils, naturally enough expected that he was about to com-

mence an elaborate speech on the subject, and accordingly prepared himself to be all ear on the occasion.

Sir Nathan, however, had no such intention, and the expectant Sir Philip, was about to repeat his invocation for the favour of his enlightened opinion, when he received a discouraging glance from the good-humoured Countess, who, although she could have wished to see the affectation of Sir Nathan properly exposed, was unwilling to subject Sir Philip English to the unpleasant reflections, which she knew that amiable and worthy baronet would feel, if his inadvertence should be made instrumental to that exposure.

But Miss Savannah, who superadded to a high sense of her own independence, a disposition to express her opinions on

every subject unreservedly, without much regarding the consequences of doing so, and moreover being aware of the true cause of Sir Nathan's silence, determined, now the game was started, to pursue it.—She told him that no person in England was so capable of judging with correctness and impartiality as himself;—that he could have no inducement to bestow unmerited praises, and that she knew the benevolence of his disposition would soften deserved censure; and therefore intreated him to indulge her with his opinion on the merits of the performance, of which he was so well qualified to speak correctly, both from his *professional* knowledge, and well-known candour.

The honourable Baronet was so much disconcerted, that he could only stammer out a few incoherent sentences, and then

relapsed into his former state of sullenness; indeed, he did not perfectly recover until near the hour of taking leave, when the sight of his splendid equipage and fine horses, seemed to introduce a new and far more pleasing train of ideas.

Sir Philip English would have prevailed upon Mr. Worth to accompany him to Blackwood-Hall the same evening; but the latter excused himself:—promising, however, to be punctual to his former appointment; "and then, Sir Philip," said he: "I shall probably have the honour "of introducing to you the author, you "have been pleased to express so great a "desire to see."

The polite Colonel endeavoured to prevail upon Sir Philip to pass another night at Boneham-Lodge, and the Baronet with great difficulty excused himself. Before

he set off, however, Courtly insisted on his taking a sandwich, which was prepared in the adjoining apartment. Many other gentlemen accompanied him, when a very ludicrous scene presented itself.

The sideboard was furnished with whatever is proper for such occasions; and amongst the provisions, oysters, prawns, and other shell-fish, in abundance. Admiral Ortolan and the General, who, were nearly, but not quite full up to the throat, thinking that they had yet room for an oyster or two, had taken possession of a pair of elbow chairs close to the sideboard. Just as Courtly, Sir Philip, and the rest of the company, were coming into the room, the Admiral was thrusting his hand into a barrel of oysters for a fresh supply; —when unfortunately, inserting the end of his finger between the gaping shells of

a very large one, which was probably more hungry than himself, the oyster immediately resented so rude an attack, and closed with all his might, upon the gallant Admiral,—who, starting from his chair in a paroxysm of wrath and pain, which rendered him totally regardless of all around him, overthrew a salver of whipt syllabubs upon Colonel Courtly, and danced round the room in a perfect phrenzy, with the oyster dangling at the end of his finger.

The Admiral cursed and raved, and called upon the company to release him from the gripe of the fish, which, in spite of his imprecations, still kept his hold.

The noise brought the ladies from the drawing-room, and the servants from the lobby. Human powers could not resist the impulse; and peals of laughter almost

drowned the shrieks and oaths of the Admiral. At last, the point of a knife being insinuated between the shells, the enemy was compelled to quit his position, and the Admiral set free. "D——n his "blood," exclaimed the son of Neptune, "he bit like a shark: here, Courtly, only "look at my finger!"

"Upon my word, Admiral, he handled "you very roughly: Umph! very rough-"ly, indeed. Quite a severe action, was "it not? Umph! I dares to say that "he would not have ventured to behave "so, if you had had him on board!"

This created fresh peals of laughter, and the Admiral not yet recovered from the pain of the bite, shook his finger occasionally in a manner which was inconceivably ludicrous.

"Gracious heavens, Admiral!" said

Miss Savannah: "is it possible? Such a "small fish too! I declare I could not "have imagined it. Was the pain very "exquisite? Very acute?"

"The devil's in it, if it were not," said Ortolan: "did you not hear me sing "out?"

"Yes, by my conscience I did," said Miss Savannah, "the report reached us "ten leagues off:—but pray, Admiral, "do you feel him bite now?"

"Now? No, d—n it! you see I have "got clear of him at last."

"But what I mean," added the loquacious lady, "is, that I have often "heard it said, that sailors when they have "had the misfortune to lose an arm, "often feel their fingers, for years after- "wards; and I thought it might be the "same about the oyster, and that you

"still felt him bite; as I perceived you
"shook your hand."

"You would shake your hand too, I
"believe," rejoined the Admiral, "if
"such a d—n'd accident had happened to
"you:—but I would never recommend
"it to any body to open oysters again."

"Oh!" said Miss Savannah, "I did not
"know that you had opened it; I thought
"you was only putting your hand into the
"barrel; I beg pardon; but really, Ad-
"miral, you frightened me so much, that
"I scarcely know what I see or hear; but
"do pray have the goodness to describe
"the particulars of the accident. One
"can not be too much guarded against
"such things: let us hear the narrative of
"the whole affair."

"Not from me, I promise you, ma-
"dam; this is no time for jesting," said

"Ortolan, when a man is in violent "pain, and his finger in danger of mor- "tifying."

Miss Savannah recommended a physician to be sent for immediately, or the part to be burnt, lest the bite of the oyster should have the same effect as that of a mad dog: and lastly, that the Admiral would set out for Southampton to be dipped in the salt-water. Thus she ran on, till the company, almost exhausted with laughing at the diversion which had been afforded them, at the Admiral's expence, took leave of each other, and departed to their respective residences, excepting the Countess of B——, who was a permanent visitor at Boneham-Lodge.

Sir Philip made his bow to the Countess and Miss Courtly, and the Colonel attended him to his carriage, laughing all

the way about the Admiral and the oyster, which, as he facetiously remarked, made some amends for the little Count having disappointed him of his company, and the sullenness which had attacked Sir Nathan.

CHAPTER VIII.

SIR PHILIP did not forget to mention to his sister the intelligence which he had received concerning his nephew; but Mrs. Burrows, instead of joining her brother in any invectives against poor Jack, as she used to call him,—said, " I heartily " wish he may come. I long to see " him: for I had a thousand things to " say when he was here last, which your " impetuosity compelled me to postpone. " When do you expect him, brother?"

" I do not expect him at all," replied Sir Philip: " the Countess said that he " would probably come to visit her at " Boneham-Lodge, before she sets off for

"London; and I told her, that if Jack
"behaved properly, or something of that
"sort, that he might come to see me."

"A very pretty invitation truly," replied Mrs. Burrows, "poor fellow! I
"shall write a note, and send it under
"cover to her Ladyship. I hate doing
"things so ungraciously. If you intend-
"ed to invite him, why not do it in a
"proper manner, more worthy of your-
"self, as well as your nephew?"

"Why? why did I not?" said Sir Philip; "because, I suppose, I had not
"my elder sister at my elbow to prompt
"me."

"Nay, brother," replied Mrs. Burrows,
"you know I never interfere on any oc-
"casion; but it is very natural for me to
"wish to see my nephew: you know how
"attentive to me he always is. Did he

" not bring me twelve volumes of new
" publications the very last time he came
" to the Hall."

" O, by-the-bye," as Courtly says, resumed Sir Philip, " I saw Mr. Worth, " and he promised to dine here to-" morrow, and to bring with him his " friend, the author of *Modern Times*."

Mrs. Burrows immediately forgot her former displeasure.—" Do you tell " me so, brother? And, of course, he " informed you who the author really " was."

" Why no, my sister, he did not: and " you would have said that it was very " impertinent in me to have asked him. " We talked a little on the subject, which " I contrived to introduce, by mention-" ing your mistake about *Modern Times*." —" Not my mistake, brother," said the

old lady, "your own mistake, for you "very well know..."—"I know what I say, "sister," cried the Baronet, "I told him "that you had made a mistake respecting "my remarks, and that...."—"My dear, "dear brother," again interrupted Mrs. "Burrows, "the mistake was your own; "only let me bring to your recollection..." —"Sister," resumed the Baronet, "you "shall do no such thing. I tell you that "it was your mistake, and if you will "not let me go on now, I will not speak "another word all day."

"Well then, go on, thou most pro- "voking of all mankind!"

"I say, sister, that somehow or other "the parson and I got into conversation "about *Modern Times*, and he said he "knew the author; and, therefore, I "begged him to introduce him to me;

" and afterwards when I invited him to
" dine here, he promised that he would
" bring the gentleman along with him.
" Therefore, it is not worth while to quar-
" rel about whose mistake it was, or how
" the subject first came on the carpet."

" And pray did you invite any more
" of the company, brother?"

" Not a single person. Let me see,
" yes, I think I did.—No! I did not.
" Thursday—something runs in my head
" about Thursday!"

" So it ought to do, brother," added
the lady; " for you surely might have
" remembered that Sir William and Lady
" Bolderwood and Mr. and Mrs. Hanaper
" and old Counsellor Brief, as you call
" him, and the Bradshaws, and I know
" not how many naval officers, whom you

" met with last week, are invited for to-
" morrow."

" Cry you mercy, sister, I protest, and
" so they are, but I always forget these
" things," said the Baronet. " Well,
" well; the more the merrier, let us hope,
" sister. I need not ask if you have
" given proper orders?—You are not
" displeased, however, that I invited Mr.
" Worth."

" So much otherwise, my dear brother,
" that I take it as a great compliment to
" myself: but I could have wished we
" had been less crowded: however, we
" may see him again probably, some other
" time, for he is really a very pleasant
" man.—But, brother, you must excuse
" my giving you one caution;—I am sure
" you will:—pray do not say one word

" about the novel; leave that entirely to " me. It would not much signify what " you might say before Sir William Bol- " derwood or my Lady, for they know no " more about such things than yourself; " —excuse me, brother—but the Brad- " shaws and Mrs. Hanaper are great read- " ers, and you might expose yourself if " you should happen to give utterance to " your opinions before those who at least " think themselves judges on such sub- " jects."

" Upon my word, sister, you entertain " a high opinion of my understanding."

" On every other subject, besides novels " and politics you know, I never contra- " dict you, brother; but on these——"

" Well, say no more," replied the Ba- ronet, " I will be still as a mummy, sister,

"motionless as a statue, and as silent as "the mandarins on the chimney-piece."

The next day, about an hour before dinner-time, a post-chaise drove up to the door. "Bless me," said Mrs. Burrows, who had not yet left her own apartments in which she was accustomed frequently to pass the whole of the morning, with her books: "who can have arrived so "soon? A cargo of naval officers, I sup"pose; do, Betty, inquire of the butler."

She received for answer, that two clergymen inquired for Sir Philip, who had not yet returned from his morning ride.

Mrs. Burrows immediately supposed that they must be Mr. Worth and his friend the author, and desired that the servant would conduct them into the library: and as soon as she had completed

the business of the toilet, hurried down stairs, in hopes of having an opportunity of a few minutes' conversation with them, before the arrival of the rest of the company.

On entering the room, however, instead of Mr. Worth, she found her brother's old acquaintance Doctor Chiselholme, who, as he was passing by, accompanied by Mr. Mendham, his curate, had called to pay his respects to Sir Philip English.

Mrs. Burrows, although a little disappointed, was very glad to see the worthy clergyman, and intreated both him and his friend to add to the dinner-party; but the Doctor excused himself, being in haste to return to his rectory, from which he had been absent for some time, in consequence of the death of his aunt.

Mrs. Burrows condoled with the Doc-

tor on his loss; and Chiselholme with all that simplicity for which he was remarkably distinguished, observed, that he trusted that he had never done any thing to shorten her days, as the old lady had completed her hundredth year.

Sir Philip having returned; and the principal part of his company arrived, when the name of Mr. Worth was announced. The Baronet received him, at his entrance, with a hearty welcome. "Mr. Worth," said he, "you have at last "found your way to Blackwood Hall. If "it has been my fault that the track "through the forest has been hitherto "impassable,—do not suffer it, in future, "to grow up for want of use. But where "is your friend?" Mr. Worth looked surprised. "The author," continued the Baronet in a lower tone of voice.

" I beg your pardon, Sir Philip," said Mr. Worth, and drawing a parcel from his pocket, presented him with *Modern Times*.

" But I entertained hopes that you " would have brought with you the author " of the work," said Sir Philip.

Mr. Worth smiled, and by his answer corrected the error into which the Baronet had inadvertently fallen. " Say nothing of the mistake to my sister," said Sir Philip,—and several gentlemen entering the room at the same moment, left Mr. Worth in order to receive them, with his accustomed kindness.

All the company were now assembled, excepting Counsellor Collis; and Sir Philip ordered dinner, observing that it was a thousand to one, but that the Counsellor, in

a fit of absence, had totally forgotten his appointment.

However, the Baronet was mistaken, and when the dinner was nearly over, Mr. Collis made his appearance.

Sir Philip received him very unceremoniously: "Counsellor," said he, "I am "glad to see you, at last. I do not ask "what *cause* has detained you; but "though you have lost your dinner by "delay, you shall not go without your "dessert."

"My brother!" said Mrs. Burrows, giving the Baronet a glance, the meaning of which he perfectly understood.—— "Why, sister," replied Sir Philip, "is "not the dessert just coming in, this mo- "ment?"

The Baronet's entertainments were al-

ways liberal; and if they were not accompanied by the frivolity of unmeaning compliments, the loss of such froth was amply compensated, by the genuine good-humour of the founder of the feast.

Mrs. Burrows had scarcely any opportunity of speaking to Mr. Worth before dinner; and the company was so numerous that she afterwards abstained from any remark on the subject which was uppermost in her mind, lest her brother, who sate between Mrs. Hanaper and Mr. Bradshaw, should join in a conversation, for which, as she had already pretty plainly told him, she thought he was not duly qualified.

A group of naval officers surrounded Mr. Worth, and a gentleman who was dressed in mourning, and seemed very silent and observant, sate opposite to him.

This person, Mrs. Burrows fixed upon as the author of *Modern Times*, and accordingly singled him out, to Sir William Bolderwood and the company at the upper end of the table, as a gentleman of splendid talents, and agreeable manners, of whom she had heard great commendations, but who had never before visited at Blackwood-Hall.

At a proper time, the ladies withdrew, and many a toast went round. Sir William Bolderwood entertained the captains with an account of his Merino flock, and the sheep-shearing at Woburn: and one of them, in return, gave the Knight the particulars of the victory off Trafalgar, with the bearings, soundings, and signals, which had been omitted in the various printed accounts of that memorable engagement.

In the mean time Sir Philip had inadvertently engaged Counsellor Collis, in a discourse upon parochial settlements,—which the latter illustrated with quotations and references innumerable: having the statutes at large, and all the commentaries by which they have been amplified, so firmly engrafted in his memory, that like Mrs. Burrows's novels, they almost prescribed to him the very mode of expression which he was accustomed to use: insomuch, that on ordinary occasions he was sometimes so completely occupied by his studies, that he has been known to run through the whole of the statutes relative to ejectments, before he would order a pig to be driven out of his garden.

The Counsellor was, however, perfectly good-humoured, and always seemed as

much pleased as his friends by the relation of his peculiarities.

Two of the naval officers who had accepted the Baronet's invitation, not merely from a desire to partake of his hospitality, but partly from an inclination to see the charming grounds which surrounded the Hall, had withdrawn unnoticed by Sir Philip, to take a walk in the gardens before tea. They were accompanied by the gentleman, who had been mistaken by Mrs. Burrows for Mr. Worth's friend the author; and when they had completed their perambulation, instead of returning to the rest of the gentlemen, who had not yet left their wine, they proceeded to the drawing-room, and rejoined the ladies at tea.

Mrs. Burrows thought she had now a

proper opportunity of addressing herself to the stranger, and by way of introduction remarked:—"I suppose, Sir, my bro-"ther will not part with your friend, Mr. "Worth."

"Madame!" replied the stranger, with a low bow, "me ver litel understand Ang-"lish!"

Now it happened that Mrs. Burrows, next to her acquaintance with fashionable literature, valued herself upon her knowledge of physiognomy, and that sort of discrimination which almost intuitively enables a person to form a sort of judgment of those whom they meet with, even before they open their mouths.

She had been unluckily descanting upon the abilities, the wit, and learning of the silent gentleman; and not entertaining the least doubt respecting the identity of the

person upon whom she had conferred all the honours of authorship, and all the applause of the most favoured among the literati, had prepared Lady Bolderwood and the company for a prodigy of wit and pleasantry, and they accordingly awaited the opening of his lips, with as much impatience as the Siamese the rising of the full moon. Nor would the latter be much more surprised, if the monster from whose clutches they imagine the luminary to have just escaped, were to seize hold of it, and carry it away before their eyes, than were the former on hearing the reply of the supposed author.

Mrs. Burrows herself was astonished, beyond measure. "I beg pardon, Sir," said she, with more hesitation than she had ever before manifested, in her whole

life,—" I mistook you for the gentleman " who accompanied Mr. Worth."

" Wordt! Wordt!" rejoined the foreigner (who was a Danish officer, and having chanced to be in company with the gentlemen, whom Sir Philip English had invited to dine at Blackwood-Hall, had been included in the party) " no I tank " you madame."

The mistake being explained by one of his companions, the stranger was relieved from farther importunity; but, the vexation of Mrs. Burrows was not at all alleviated. She had thus convicted herself of a blunder, which if it had occurred to any other person in company, not excepting her brother, she would have thought unpardonable.

In order to obliterate her own chagrin

as much as possible, she called for cards immediately, and the remainder of the company having joined them, she had the satisfaction of sitting down to whist with Mr. Worth; and waited in momentary expectation of hearing him address some one or other of the gentlemen, in such a manner as to make a discovery of the person for whom she had mistaken the foreigner. Mr. Worth, however, in obedience to the hint, which he had received from Sir Philip, avoided saying any thing about the novel: and seemed to confine his attention entirely to the company at the table, and the cards in his hand.

There were two more tables; and the company were so much occupied by their respective games, that with the exception of a conversation between Sir Philip Eng-

lish and Mr. Hanaper, who had retired to the farther side of the drawing-room, and spoke in a very low tone of voice, that they might not disturb the whist players, almost a dead silence had, for some time prevailed;—when, in a moment, as if by a consentaneous impulse, the naval officers, the foreigner, Sir William Bolderwood, the young ladies, and, in short, every person in the room excepting Mrs. Burrows, who was intent upon her cards to save a particular point of the game, were convulsed by an immoderate peal of laughter.

Mrs. Burrows started almost from her seat, and to her inexpressible surprise, beheld the object of merriment standing at her elbow, with his usual serenity, totally unconscious of being the cause of so much diversion. It was Counsellor Col-

lis, who had left his *chapeau de bras* below stairs, and supplied the place of it, under his arm, with a certain mahogany cover,—not intended for the head, but extremely useful in another place, at which the reader may easily guess.

But how successful soever he may be, in such a conjecture, it is impossible for him to imagine the effect which was produced by the inflexible gravity of the old Counsellor, who, not in the least suspecting himself to be the object of laughter, manifested no disposition to remove from the most conspicuous part of the room, in which he had stationed himself, until Sir Philip, in an interval between the bursts of laughter, called out: "my dear Collis, "what the devil have you got under your "arm?"

The Counsellor aroused from his reverie,

in much the same manner as a traveller, when some one cries out to him, not to tread on a snake,—hastily lifting up his arm, let fall *the shield*; which, as if ashamed of having been the laughing-stock of the company, spontaneously rolled towards the door, whilst the Counsellor looked with the most wistful astonishment, first at the company who reiterated their laughter, and next at the self-moving piece of mahogany, into which his *chapeau de bras* seemed to have been metamorphosed; nor could he at all reconcile the circumstance to his own mind, until he had actually picked up the fugitive and examined it. "By *St. Jaques*, it must "have been so," muttered the Counsellor, "here, Harry," to Sir Philip's servant, "do take this thing away, and see if you "can find my hat. Really, Mrs. Bur-

" rows, I ought to beg pardon of you, and
" the good company, for the interruption
" I have occasioned. I am sure I knew
" nothing about the matter. I was all
" the time thinking of Comyns's Digest,
" Sir Philip, about which we had been
" talking, and I believe the clause is in
" the first volume, and about the two hun-
" dred and seventy-ninth page!"

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOGI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL.

CHAPTER IX.

SIR PHILIP ENGLISH had engaged Mr. Worth to remain at Blackwood Hall as long as his ecclesiastical duties would permit him to be absent from his vicarage; and the rest of the company having taken their leave, he sate down with the Baronet and Mrs. Burrows to a comfortable supper: for Sir Philip often said that as his ancestors had always been accustomed to finish the day with a regular meal, and he himself had never experienced any ill consequences from the practice, he knew no reason for excluding supper from the rank it used to hold among domestic enjoyments. He had no notion of expel-

ling mince-pie and custard from the central table to the side-board, or sitting down without napkins, or munching a crust in a corner, instead of following the good example of those who had enabled him to treat his friends like a gentleman.

"Well, now the company are gone," said the Baronet, "I suppose there will "be no harm in introducing your friend "the author, to my sister."

"Pray where ? did you leave him, Sir "Philip," said the parson.

Mrs. Burrows testified her surprise by her looks. "What," said she to herself, "has he been all this time in the house, "without my knowing it ?"—But her ingenuity immediately suggested, that perhaps, like many other unfortunate authors, his appearance might not be such as would have rendered it proper to intro-

duce him to a large and promiscuous company.—Whilst Sir Philip left the room to fetch the book, Mrs. Burrows very benevolently remarked to Mr. Worth:—"I am glad that I did not know the au-"thor was in the house, for he is so "great a favourite of mine, that I "should not have had any comfort till I "could have seen him: from the mo-"ment my brother mentioned, that he "expected you would bring him to "Blackwood-Hall, I have almost counted "the hours which should introduce me "to a personal acquaintance with . . . ." At this instant the door opened, Mrs. Burrows arose from her seat, and to do as much honour as possible to her expected visitor, reached a chair herself, and prepared to drop one of her best courtesies,—when lo! Sir Philip entered the room

with three volumes of *Modern Times* in his hand.

" I thought, brother," said she, ready to sink to the floor with vexation and disappointment, " that the author himself " was here."

" No, sister; only his proxy has any " proximity to us at present ! "

" This is excessively provoking, " exclaimed Mrs. Burrows,—but well knowing that Sir Philip's puns, like Sancho Pança's proverbs, were innumerable, she avoided further remark, and turning to Mr. Worth as if for explanation; he very politely observed, that, from some inadvertence of his own, he had conveyed to Sir Philip, the idea that it was his intention to introduce the author *in propriâ personâ*: and thus occasioned the mistake, for which he begged leave to apologize,

as it originated entirely in his own incautious manner of expressing himself.

"From you, Mr. Worth," replied Mrs. Burrows, "no kind of apology is "necessary. I know the whole of the "business as well as if I had been pre-"sent:—it was not any want of precision "on your part, but an unfortunate knack "which my brother has:—yes, my dear "brother," addressing herself to the Baronet, "you know you have, of making "a mistake whenever it is at all practi-"cable. I have often told you how much "you resemble Parson Adams, in Field-"ing's incomparable Joseph Andrews. "If there were a bare possibility of mis-"taking a road, such as by turning to the "right hand instead of the left, Adams "was sure to blunder;—just such a "knack have you of misquoting and mis-

"understanding; with the very best in-
"tentions in the world,—almost, almost
"as bad as old counsellor Collis."

"Go on, sister," said Sir Philip, laughing, with great good-humour, "pray "go on."

Early the next morning, as Mr. Worth and Sir Philip were preparing to take a ride together, an express arrived with a letter for Sir Philip, to inform him that Captain English had been thrown out of a *tandem* on the road from Brighton, and was lying at Ryegate in a very dangerous condition.

The Baronet carried the letter to his sister, who suggested that he should set out without delay, to visit his nephew: but Sir Philip positively refused. He was so much offended by the duplicity of the Captain, in having pretended that he was

going to Scarborough instead of Brighton, that he said, he considered Jack English no better than a swindler; and would not go one step out of his house, on his account.

"Brother," said Mrs. Burrows, "I "insist upon it that you go; or I will "set out myself; therefore, if you are re- "solved to be so cruel to your nephew, as "to leave him to die at an inn, pray send "your servant, and order a post-chaise "for me, immediately."

The Baronet paused:—his sister's speech had made an impression: he felt something rise up in his throat, and a tingling sensation in his eyes to which he was not accustomed. This was a conflict between anger and affection.

After a moment's hesitation, he told his sister that if she must go, she should

make use of his carriage. After some altercation this was agreed upon; and the necessary directions were accordingly given, to prepare for the journey.

In a few minutes afterwards, Sir Philip began to express his apprehensions, that his sister might endanger her health, which was then very infirm and precarious, by so long a journey.

" All this is nothing to the purpose, " my dear brother," said Mrs. Burrows. " I have no selfish considerations: *let* " *me first endeavour to give assistance to* " *my nephew, now he is in want of it;* " *and afterwards talk of my own ailments* " *and maladies.* Perhaps he may have " broken a leg or an arm;—let me see " the letter."

" There it is," said the Baronet, " I " can not read above half of it; I think

"it says something about a doctor, but I "do not comprehend it, exactly."

Mrs. Burrows hastily looked through this curious epistle, and immediately put it in her pocket; for she knew that an explanation of the contents would only increase the displeasure of her brother; and make him still more angry with the Captain.

The letter was from a young nobleman, the intimate friend and associate of Jack English, who had accompanied him from Brighton in a *tandem*, drawn by *donkeys*, (it was this word which the Baronet, not being much accustomed to such manuscripts, had mistaken for doctors), and in running a race against a caravan on the road, had been overturned into a pit, the carriage broken to pieces, Captain

English excessively bruised, and Lord Rivulet deprived of two of his front teeth.

Sir Philip English was more and more uneasy, as the time approached for his sister's departure; and at length told her, that since she had determined to undertake the journey, although he had no pity for the Captain, out of regard for her, he would himself accompany her to Ryegate.

" If I did not know your disposition, " brother, so well," said Mrs. Burrows, " that I am sure of making a convert of " you before you get to the end of the " journey, I would not, for the world, " set my foot in the same coach with a " person who refuses to pity my poor " nephew. But, I know, that the mo- " ment you see him, all your resentment " will give place to sentiments more wor-

" thy of yourself and of him.—I dare-
" say there was some mistake about Scar-
" borough. Most likely one of your
" own blunders."

The latter part of the sentence was lost upon Sir Philip, who was engaged in giving directions to his valet to put up the clothes he should want, or rather wish for;—for he had about him so much of the old batchelor, in this respect, that he usually travelled with almost as much baggage, as is allowed for a regiment of foot.

Sir Philip would have persuaded Mr. Worth to accompany them, but he excused himself on account of his parochial duties: and therefore, after due apologies on both sides, the clergyman took his leave, promising to wait upon Sir Philip, as soon as he returned to Blackwood Hall.

Mrs. Burrows had taken breakfast, and completed the preparations for her departure:—the coach was at the door, and a multitude of packages of the Baronet bestowed in their proper places, when just as they as they were stepping into the carriage, Sir Philip recollected that he had invited a large party to dine with him, on the next day: and that it would be necessary to send some excuses to prevent the disappointment of the company.

Mrs. Burrows, whose patience was already exhausted by the delay which had been occasioned by the *stowage* of her brother's *paraphernalia*, as she called it, was now still more out of humour; and sent message after message to hasten the attendance of Sir Philip, who, at last, made his appearance, with his gloves in his hand, and stepped into the coach.

Scarcely was the door shut, before the Baronet calling for his old servant, Harry, reminded him, that they had forgotten a favourite great coat, which he thought might be wanted, a walking-cane, and a perspective-glass.

The coat was brought, but it was some time before the glass could be found: at last that was also forthcoming. "Now, "my dear brother," said Mrs. Burrows, "I hope it is not possible for you to con-"trive another moment's delay."—"Only "just to get my little book of the roads," replied Sir Philip, "we may not want it, "indeed; but such things should always "be at hand." Harry went for the book of maps, and, at length, the coach moved forward, and relays of horses being ready, they reached Ryegate the same night.

Neither the Baronet nor Mrs. Burrows,

would have known their nephew, so much was he altered in consequence of the accident which had happened to him. He, however, assured them, that he did not think he had incurred any very serious damage, and had yielded to the importunity of others, rather than his own wishes, in allowing his aunt and Sir Philip to be disturbed on his account. He was very much bruised, his face was red and scratched all over, as if he had been rolled among brambles, exquisitely sore, and swollen to such a degree, that he could scarcely open his eyes.

"What medical advice have you had?" said Mrs. Burrows.—"Only a country "apothecary," replied Jack; "but Lord "Rivulet would not be satisfied with- "out assistance from town; and is, there-

" fore, gone himself for a physician, " whom I every moment expect."

" Lord Rivulet! " said the Baronet, " how did he go? Upon a dead horse, " in a fish cart?"

" My dear uncle," said English, " these " are only follies of youth:—when you " was a young man, I dare say you were " guilty of some levities, yourself."

" I never swindled my relations," replied the Baronet, " under the pretext of " having a long journey to make into the " north, whilst, all the time, I only in- " tended to drive a *tandem* round the " Steyne at Brighton."

" Nay, my dear Sir," said the Captain, " you wrong me, if you suppose me capa- " ble of such duplicity.—I will explain the " matter. I really did intend to be at Scar- " borough before this time; but the fellow

"with whom I made my bet, has lost his "grandfather, and is gone into Kent, to "take possession of the estate, and get "a *little ready*; and the money you "lent me is actually staked for the per- "formance of the bet, as soon as little "Tommy arrives."

"Who the devil is little Tommy?" said Sir Philip.

"He is the eldest son of a peer," said English; "but we always call him by that "name."

"And my money staked, I suppose, on "an ass-race," continued the Baronet.— Here Mrs. Burrows interposed, and insisted, that no farther discussion of old grievances should take place, at present.

Lord Rivulet returned from London the next morning, bringing intelligence that his friend, Doctor Destiny, was engaged

to set out for Brighton that very day, and would visit Captain English in his way thither.

The apothecary, who had previously attended, was ordered to hold himself in readiness to meet the Doctor, for whose arrival Sir Philip and his sister, were become very anxious, as the applications hitherto made use of, had increased the swelling and inflammation of the face, so that poor English could scarcely see at all.

At length, Doctor Destiny made his appearance;—— expressed the greatest anxiety lest he should not complete his journey in good time; regretted exceedingly, that he should be detained on the road; and intimated, that nothing but his great regard for Lord Rivulet and his father, could have induced him to stop a

single moment even if the Premier had sent for him.

Sir Philip was about to mention to the Doctor, the nature of the accident which had occasioned his nephew to require medical assistance; but the son of Esculapius stopped him short:—"I have no "time, Sir Philip, for conversation, I "shall know every thing about the case, "the moment I see your nephew;" and then desired to be conducted to the chamber of his patient.

Destiny, either through hurry or inadvertence, had conceived that *young Jack English,* for by that familiar appellation Lord Rivulet had denominated his friend, was a school-boy, instead of a Captain in the Guards; and, unfortunately, the slight and slender figure of Captain English, and

his delicacy of features, seemed to countenance the Doctor in that idea, and thus the sight of his patient confirmed him in the error of his opinion.

The moment he entered the room, and observed poor Jack's face covered with a fiery redness and innumerable scratches and vesicles everywhere about it, "I see, I see," cried the Doctor. "Poor young gentle-" man; your face is very sore and pain-" ful, is it not?"

"Excessively so, indeed," replied the Captain.

"Let me look at your arm?" said the Doctor.

The Captain complied, observing at the same time, "I have been already bled, " by Mr. Hartshorn, the apothecary."

"Very well, very well;" replied the Doctor, "we will endeavour to make you

"better. The case is very clear, Sir Phi-
"lip:"—and immediately leaving the room, called for pen, ink, and paper.

"Pray Doctor, what do you think of "my nephew?" said Sir Philip, "is he "in great danger?"

"No, Sir Philip, no danger of death, "but it will be a long time before this "humour is subdued:—strange infatu-"ation! You are convinced, I dare say, "of the cause of all this mischief."

"O, yes," replied Sir Philip; "too "well aware of that Doctor. All his own "fault; he can blame no body but him-"self."

Destiny shook his head. The prescription being finished, Sir Philip slipped five guineas into his hand. "Pray, Sir "Philip," said the Doctor, "let your "nephew exactly follow my prescription:

" there is no other man in England, who
" knows any thing about these complaints
" besides myself. I will look in upon
" him again, on my return:"—and so saying, seated himself in his gig, and *whipped* away for Brighton.

At this moment the apothecary arrived, out of breath; and fearing that he might incur the imputation of negligence, exerted himself to overtake the Doctor; which having done, and inquired what he thought of the case?

" There can be but one opinion," said Destiny: " *lues bovilla* exactly as I have
" described it, in my book: the same ex-
" cessive redness; the face puffed up, par-
" ticularly about the eyes, I observe *stra-*
" *bismus* coming on. I wish Mr. Harts-
" horn, you would collect the particulars
" for me: how long it is since he had the

"*Cow-Pox*, and who vaccinated him.
"Be correct about names and dates;—
"the mark on his arm is almost worn out:
"I looked, but could scarcely perceive it.
"I am in a great hurry now. You will
"find my prescription. I shall see you
"again as I return to town."

The Doctor drove on, and left Hartshorn in the greatest imaginable perplexity. It would be tedious to repeat all the conjectures of Sir Philip and Mrs. Burrows, who had never seen this physician before: and all the attempts of Mr. Hartshorn to reconcile himself to the belief that the Doctor had not mistaken him for some other person, and was all the time speaking of some other patient, were ineffectual:—but the truth was that Destiny had suffered his head to be so completely occupied by a pamphlet which he had then in the press, in opposition to the practice

of vaccination, that he could scarcely think of any thing else; and had no sooner beheld the floridness and pimples upon Captain English's face, than he immediately set them down as the direful consequences of the Cow-Pox.

The Captain was, at the time of the accident, so completely stunned by the fall, that he had a very imperfect recollection afterwards, of what had really happened to him.

There was a cottage near the spot, and the good woman belonging to it, lent her assistance to Lord Rivulet's servant, in dragging English from a bed of nettles; into the very midst of which he had been thrown. These nettles had, in fact, occasioned the soreness, inflammation, and pain, which had principally distressed him, and deceived the Doctor.

The apothecary, who had never dreamt of any such thing as looking for the *causes* of a disease, in order to adapt his remedies, was perfectly at a loss about the matter. Lord Rivulet had been too much engaged with washing his own face, examing the devastations made in his mouth by the aid of a pocket mirror, and looking for the two teeth he had lost among the gravel of the turnpike road, to regard the place where his friend Jack had fallen; and the servant, who was a Swiss, had been immediately sent off with intelligence to Sir Philip English; so that no one imagined the real state of the case, until about a quarter of an hour after Doctor Destiny had taken leave; when the poor woman came from her cottage to inquire after the Captain: and being questioned by Mrs.

Burrows relative to the accident, explained it, in the manner above mentioned.

"I thought there was something very "strange in the appearance of his face," said Mrs. Burrows; "and now it is ac"counted for."

"Dear Madam," said the poor woman, "there is nothing in the world so good to "cure the bite of a stinging nettle as vine"gar and brandy, and if you will only "have it used twice or three times, I am "sure the good gentleman will soon be "well."

English wanted but little inducement to prefer this application to those which had already occasioned him so much pain; and it is scarcely necessary to add, that he derived almost immediate relief from the use of it.

Sir Philip told the old woman, that he

thought her a much better physician than the London doctor, and accordingly made her also a present of a fee of five guineas.

Lord Rivulet had retired to bed, on his return from town, in consequence of the fatigue of the journey, which he had performed with uncommon celerity, having rode at the rate of fifteen miles an hour! But finding himself pretty well recovered, towards evening got up and presented himself to Mrs. Burrows and Sir Philip English, who although, they could not avoid blaming their nephew for his attachment to such a hair-brained associate, were nevertheless under a real obligation to his Lordship, for the kindness and solicitude he had manifested on account of English.

His Lordship was much gratified to find his friend so much benefited by the

old woman's recipe: but, when Mrs. Burrows related to him an account of the extraordinary behaviour of his friend Doctor Destiny, he shrugged up his shoulders, raised himself on tiptoe and pointing to his forehead, exclaimed—"no man "living, madam, is always wise." Then putting on his hat, a little over the left eye, squaring his left elbow in the attitude of a coachman, and imitating with his fingers and cheeks the crack of a whip, "D—me! but the old buck is as good a "whip as the best of them, excepting "Sir Willoughby Aston, and the members of the Club. I thought he had "known better: if I had been up, madam, d—me! but I would have set him "right about the disease."

"He ought to have set himself right," said Mrs. Burrows; "it was a most into-

" lerable blunder, and entirely the con-
" sequence of being in a hurry, and such
" blunders, as the Spectator says, should
" never be pardoned. I do assure you,
" my Lord, that it has given me so bad
" an opinion of the Doctor, that I would
" not suffer him to attend my dog."

" No: madam! d—me if he would.—
" The old fellow hates dogs almost as
" much as cows; and ever since a certain
" nobleman took up a cur in the street,
" and carried him home in his arms;
" Destiny has invariably avoided meeting
" his Lordship (excepting once at a chris-
" tening) for fear he should have learned
" to bite."

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END OF VOL. I.

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